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THE TEACHER
IN THE MAKING

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THE TEACHER IN THE MAKING

BY

ALEX. KENNEDY, M.A. (EDIN.), B.A. (LOND.)

LECTURER IN METHODS, MORAY HOUSE TRAINING COLLEGE
EDINBURGH

FOREWORD BY

GODFREY H. THOMSON, D.C.L., Ph.D., D.Sc.

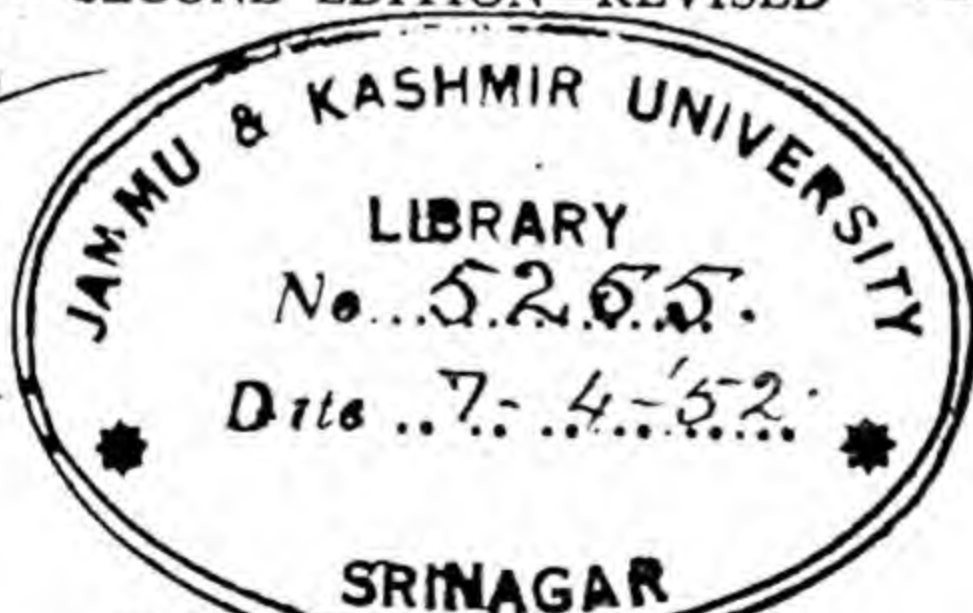
PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
DIRECTOR OF STUDIES, MORAY HOUSE TRAINING COLLEGE

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FOREWORD

It is always to me a great pleasure to introduce to the outside world a book written by one of my younger colleagues, and I am glad to say that it is a pleasure which comes my way with welcome frequency. This book will, I feel sure, be useful. It is sternly practical, aimed at helping the beginner. It does not decry the study of the more academic or theoretical aspects, the psychological or the philosophical, of the teacher's job. But it is written by one who knows that the immediate and sore need of the raw hand is some practical hints, with a background of wise suggestion and encouragement.

Mr Kennedy is well able to supply this need. He was already a teacher in service before the Great War. After demobilisation he taught for several years in Moray House Demonstration School—a large school with all the problems found in such—and towards the end of that time he ranked as a part-time “Master of Method.” For seventeen years now he has been fully engaged in this latter work, but has never for a day been entirely absent from the class-room. He knows children, and he knows students in training; he has the respect of both, and has given freely of himself in the service of both. Nor has he yielded to the insidious creeping danger against which he warns the young

teacher in his closing pages, the danger of "getting into a rut."

This booklet is a distillation of his years of work and experience, and I wish it all success.

GODFREY H. THOMSON

Professor of Education

THE UNIVERSITY, EDINBURGH

PREFACE

SUPERIOR in general scholarship though he may be, the student of to-day, it will be generally agreed, is at a disadvantage compared with his predecessor of the pupil-teacher era, inasmuch as he comes to college, in most cases, untried and with but the haziest notions of the factors involved in the practice of teaching. As he becomes more and more deeply immersed in the new subjects of his training course, he is too distracted to find for himself, amidst the shifting sands of theories and methods, a firm foundation on which to establish a plan of approach to his future work, the routine business of teaching. The pupil-teacher's education may have been badly truncated but at least he approached his college course with a standard against which to refer the implications of his new studies. The present-day student says in effect: "Tell me *how*—not in general terms; so many books do that. Tell me *how*—in detail." And, since he is but human, he adds inwardly, "Please hurry, for the session is passing!"

To attempt to write a book on the everyday practical details of teaching craft may seem a hazardous undertaking—as indeed it is. The Author's experience, both as teacher and lecturer, has made him the more diffident in approaching it and at the same time more and more convinced of the need for such a book in the hands of students-in-training during—and even after—their college course, so that they may have at least an approximation to the straight start of their pre-

decessors. It is to be hoped that whatever shortcomings this book may have will be considered in the light of that diffidence and of that need—urgently and repeatedly expressed by both former and present students, in their eagerness to equip themselves worthily for their profession—and pardoned on the plea that we have with commendable patience awaited its penning by other, and perhaps more expert, hands.

Here will be found no ephemeral or untried theories but only such methods as have successfully passed the test of experience, not with picked classes or in selected schools, but in the everyday life of the ordinary school.

For this second edition, apart from minor alterations of language in the interests of greater clarity, the contents remain unchanged, except in two respects. Recent years have re-impressed the imperative need of straight thinking and of guiding principles. Some such principles are suggested on p. xv, and in Chapter V greater stress has been laid on the seven keys which unlock for the children, and for us all, the gateways of thought.

To those—educationists and practical teachers (the distinction is merely one of convenience, not invidious)—from whom both here and throughout his career he has absorbed ideas and received suggestions and helpful guidance, the Author welcomes this renewed opportunity of acknowledging his indebtedness. He is especially grateful to Dr J. W. Oliver for reading the proofs and to the Publishers and their Editor for their helpful co-operation.

A. K.

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INTRODUCTION

INTEREST in children as children is vital for all who desire to work among the young ; for the teacher it is the first essential. Without it the teacher may become a clever craftsman, but his thoughts will be centred solely upon the subject-matter he is called upon to teach. By the children he will be regarded merely as an exponent, more or less exacting, of an external efficiency ; they will not look to him for understanding guidance. He will miss the joy and fun which should come of intimate contact with children, and indeed, may be guilty of a serious wrong if, not wishing to be cruel, he yet has no knowledge of the ways in which to be truly kind.

Teaching is not an easy task. For perhaps forty years a teacher's working life is spent among groups of lively, restless beings with immature minds, who claim all his ingenuity, tax patience to the uttermost, and not infrequently crown with disappointment the effort for which he had counted on success. Nor does his work cease when he leaves the precincts of the school. Apart from home corrections, he must, if he is to keep himself abreast of his duties, devote time to planning ahead, to diligent reading, and even to attending refresher courses. Unless the keynote of these activities be "Blessed be drudgery" and the teacher's interest in children be definite and authentic, his life is apt to become a desert journey punctuated by sharp rocks and bounded by weary distances. Happily, there is another side to the picture.

The study of children has a fascination all its own ; the so-called drudgery of the routine is forgotten in the steady increase of one's interests ; every new pupil is a new adventure. Despite the restrictions imposed by curricula and time-tables, the teacher's position affords scope and opportunity to exploit his own and his pupils' initiative. He learns by teaching, and as he reveals new vistas to his pupils he discovers wider horizons for himself. Without forsaking methods of proved value, he is constantly seeking improved means of serving the individual and collective needs of the children. Not infrequently, his is the joy of seeing a dull or a delinquent child "turn the corner."

His charges pass on and leave him behind, "built in with the foundations," but as the years move forward he meets former pupils who are glad to renew the association and to exchange reminiscences of schooldays, and in the encounter the real value of his work is revealed to him. For those who come to it with interest, teaching has joys that greatly outweigh its disappointments.

The first decades of the twentieth century may well stand out in the annals of history on account of their "discovery of the child." It was no accident that these two great innovations, the Boy Scout Movement and the invention of Meccano, were introduced in this period ; and since then the ever-increasing interest in children has brought about a beneficent revolution in school-practice and in the attitude of society in general to child-life.

In the old days, school children were too frequently regarded merely as receptacles for the storage of information, and mechanical methods of telling and of testing were almost universally employed ; a rigid compulsion, which often carried with it punishment for inability as if it were serious delinquency, tended to

thwart and to crush the very instincts that Nature intends to be utilised for growth and development. Good cause had the schoolboy for creeping "like snail unwillingly to school."

Many fine teachers taught under the old régime, but although they belonged to, they were not of, the system, and they were the first to grasp the implications of the new ideas evoked by the psychological study of the child.

Nowadays, blessed with the knowledge that children are not compact of original sin, but rather of a desire to know and to do, we have been able to replace severity by co-operation and to appeal to the child's instinct for adventure and growth. Obedience and rules there must obviously be, but where these are used as guiding lines, and not merely as barriers, school can be a place of happy, purposeful activity and exploration.

Nor is the end yet in sight. The student of to-day who comes to his chosen profession with the passion to help will find much still to improve and develop. Theorising alone, however, will not suffice. If he is to speak with authority, he must know children through long and intimate contact, and his knowledge of school life can only be profound when it has been acquired from the inside.

An ever-present danger threatens the teacher whether he be young or experienced. The subjects taught make such exacting demands upon the instructor's skill and attention that he is inclined to treat these media of instruction as ends in themselves and, almost against his will, to regard his interest in his pupils as bounded by their proficiency in what is taught. The danger is most imminent for the specialist, but it is present in whichever part of the school a teacher is placed.

This tendency to let subject-proficiency take precedence over the welfare of the individual child will colour all the teacher's methods. In its extreme form, it will take him back to the solely factual methods of the old system with all its repressions. It is imperative, therefore, that the student-teacher should begin his course by impressing indelibly on his memory the maxim that governs all the discussions in the chapters that follow, namely :

Behind the power to teach a subject must be the power to teach the child.

The first seven chapters are devoted to the student. They set forth, as far as possible in the order in which they are likely to occur in his experience, the lines of his practical training in the schools, and offer, not ready-made solutions to his difficulties, but a handy guide to the principles involved in their elucidation. The data given in Chapter VII will not only enable him to gain experience in assessing his own requirements through self-criticism, but will prove useful, after he becomes a teacher, should he have to direct other beginners along the road he has himself travelled. These chapters take the student up to the point where difficulties and variations become so individual that their adjustment must be left to personal contact between learner and supervisor.

Chapters VIII to XI are addressed essentially to the young teacher. They deal with just such matters as are not likely to face the beginner in all their urgency until he has become the teacher responsible for a class of children. Stress is laid upon problems of class management ; and the plans for dovetailing activities (Chapter X), and the suggestions for reaching the individual will, it is hoped, provide the foundations on which the young teacher will build.

The beginner must not only know the details of method learnt during his course ; he requires also to realise the points to which he must direct his special attention if he is to make the best use of his opportunities. "The power to teach" is based on a clear understanding of all that is implied in the sections on "The Purpose of the School" and "Personality" (Chapter I), and on "Explanation," "Questioning" and "The Utilisation of Answers" (Chapter V).

Mere telling and testing, a method for which advocates may still be found, tends to produce spoon-fed, docile citizens, easily swayed and readily convinced—a danger to themselves and to civilisation.

It is imperative to recognise that it is especially by the skilful and complete utilisation of question and answer that the young teacher will win the co-operation which spells success in teaching, and so enable his children to become citizens who have learned to think things out, to see the wood as well as the trees, and to make right decisions for themselves.

Yet no detail of method is unimportant ; the beginner must be prepared, by assiduous practice, to become thoroughly conversant with every point of technique required in the training and education of children ; for on our work as teachers depends nothing less than the very destinies of civilisation itself.

Technique, therefore, is not an end but a means ; and the children's needs will not be served unless we cut out sentimentality, break the vicious circle which allies goodness with weakness, and guide their lives and our own by sound principles. Can we have any better than these?—

Face up to life.
Think things fully out.
Strive for brotherhood.

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PART I
THE STUDENT

THE TEACHER'S KEYS

WHO? WHAT? WHEN? WHERE?

HOW? WHY?

RESULT?

CHAPTER I

THE PURPOSE OF THE SCHOOL

THE intention of the teacher is to give the children information and guidance which will call forth their possibilities, and fit them for the work and leisure of life. He strives to train them to think logically and widely, and to develop in them the power to make right decisions, so that they may play, with wisdom, the part for which their talents fit them. The teacher moulds the future citizens. He has it in his power to do much to make them citizens worthy of the name.

THE PERSONALITY OF THE TEACHER

No psychological definition is attempted here, but rather the answer to the question those in authority will ask themselves, namely, "Does this candidate possess the qualities which make him a fit and proper person to be placed in charge of school children?"

The problem can be restated thus: Important as it is, the ability to impart information is not in itself sufficient. The child, endowed as he is with the power of discerning the real individual behind the appearance, will model himself on the person that is his teacher, not on what the latter pretends to be. The prime consideration, therefore, is character.

Confidence in oneself is a first essential in the young teacher. Initial awkwardness and ignorance need not

connote lack of ability. Many instances are known to the writer of students in training, who, at first extremely diffident, gradually and with determination mastered the technique of their work, point by point, and in the process mastered also their own fears. Confidence is born of resolution and knowledge.

An orderly mind and a balanced outlook on life are the qualities which one is striving to induce in the children, and are those, therefore, that the young teacher should pay particular and constant attention to in himself. No one can give to others what he does not himself possess.

A due sense of proportion, of relative values, is bound up with the capacity to see a situation from various sides, not merely from the subjective point of view.

E.g. The young, lately qualified, and newly appointed teacher, possessing higher academic qualifications, may feel a secret sense of superiority towards some of his colleagues, who have given years to the service of the children. From his colleagues' point of view, he is only a beginner, who has yet to prove his worth in the life of the school, and who will need their friendship, their guidance—and perhaps their patience.

This ability to place oneself at another's viewpoint is indispensable for successful work among children, and necessitates close observation and persistent practice. It will be discussed in some detail in Chapter V under "Questioning" and "Use of Answers."

The capacity to think for himself and to make his own decisions is for the teacher a *sine qua non*. Without it he will neither win the confidence nor command the respect of his pupils, and his influence on them will not be for their good.

The trouble which afflicts many so-called indecisive people is not inability to select and to judge wisely, but is failure to trust in and be responsible for their own judg-

ments. Indecision has its source, normally, in a lack of moral courage. It is a negative state, a decision to be weak, to wait upon the opinions of others. Where it is conjoined, as in a teacher's duties, with responsibility, this vacillation begins in fear, and ends only too often in a nervous breakdown.

The novice need not dread blundering. His seniors have come the road he is travelling and their experience of children's capabilities is wider than his. They understand and will be willing to help.

In school, as in life generally, decisions must sometimes be made which call for serious and unhasty deliberation of the problem in all its aspects. In other words, a reasoned judgment, not a summary decision, is expected. "To sleep on it" is, in such circumstances, sound psychology.

Again, emergencies arise which demand prompt action under stress. If the well-being of the young people, which is the teacher's care, is to be jealously promoted, quick decision has to become a habit. Children delight in obeying the balanced teacher who is capable and who can be trusted to act wisely in a crisis.

An equable temper is a further necessity. Fussiness is detrimental, and habitual irritability fatal, to the influence a teacher's personality ought to radiate. An overt indication of being ruffled may on occasion be excused in a young teacher: we are all human; but such exhibitions should steadily diminish in frequency as his or her experience increases, and should eventually cease to occur.

It is no excuse to say, "I have been terribly worried recently." Must the pupils suffer merely because life is pressing hard upon their mentor?

Bad temper may proceed from a variety of causes: three concern us here—fear of failure to satisfy the Head of

the school and the inspectors, forgetfulness of the pupils' limitations, and a dread of losing control. In the event of an impasse, a frank visit to the Head will help. He expects to be consulted by all his young teachers. Dread of losing grip will be discussed in Chapter II under "Class-management," but at this point it is well to bear in mind that vigorous children find a special delight in playing upon the irascibility of a teacher who shows he is easily irritated.

A sense of humour is a priceless asset. Sarcasm or wit is not humour. Many people who do not possess a biting tongue, a nimble wit, or the raconteur's gift, have yet a delightful appreciation of the humour of life. Humour connotes kindness, a sense of proportion, a balanced optimism, and a capacity for infinite patience. Sarcasm directed at a child is probably mere rudeness and refined bullying, but children feel at ease with a teacher whose humour springs from a sound humanitarianism.

The value of a restrained, quizzical smile is worthy of the beginner's consideration.

It is also interesting and helpful to make a study of the differing manifestations of humour in children at various ages, and to observe how it differs from the humour of the educated adult.

Courtesy and good manners are the outward signs of a cultivated mind, and every teacher—indeed everyone who aspires to train children—should be able to lay claim to these attributes. Children absorb quickly the unobtrusive influence of a cultured atmosphere and environment, and they are as quick to notice their absence.

That a teacher should be earnest, reliable, and progressive, scarcely needs to be said. There is no room in the teaching profession for any who are not. "An institution is only the lengthened shadow of one man."

MANNER AND BEARING

An alert, frank, bright attitude is a necessity. Sound work requires an encouraging, purposeful atmosphere in the class-room, and it is the teacher who creates that atmosphere.

Manner is the reflex of personality. It reveals the presence or absence of interest in the children and in what is being taught. It also tells whether the teacher's knowledge is perfunctory or thorough ; children are splendid detectives.

Animation and encouragement must, however, be clearly differentiated from the softness which stamps the teacher who considers his pupils' feelings of the moment rather than their requirements. The successful teacher's attitude is at once restrained and impelling, so that those under his charge appreciate that a standard of steady, honest endeavour is being set, which they can and must attain.

(See, too, under "Class-management.")

SPEECH

The voice is the chief of a teacher's tools. Its importance cannot be too strongly stressed. Powers of expression, which have carried him with fair success through most of the ordinary circumstances of life, may prove inadequate when he engages in the training of children. He must be able to address a class as a whole. He must, too, be able to speak to an individual or to a small group, so as to be effective without disturbing others at different work : this latter ability is particularly desirable under rural-school conditions. Oral reading of a high standard, of both prose and verse, is also demanded, since the teacher's duty is to illuminate the sense by adequate expression, to give a

pattern worthy of imitation, and to demonstrate the beauty which lies in literature.

In the primary school, the teacher normally takes the same pupils in all lessons every day. According as his tones are loud and strident, or mellow and firm, will the children's lives in school be passed under constant strain or in an atmosphere of unagitated activity.

All utterances—statement, question, or command—should be made calmly, clearly, and with decision. The failure of the pupils to respond to injunctions or enquiries may be due to the use of language beyond their grasp (see Chapter V, "Description"), but it may equally be the result of the young teacher's carelessness : of vowels mispronounced or syllables slurred ; of the failure of the voice to reach every member of the class ; or of the lack of incisiveness in tone that alone can produce the immediate effect desired. It is profitable to consider these hindrances in turn.

(1) Mispronunciation and slurring have a bad effect upon the children. Where these faults exist, they have probably become engrained habits and can only be eradicated by constant practice and persistent care. The following suggestions may help :

Use a good pronouncing dictionary.

Copy those recognised as good speakers.

Read aloud daily, in private, for five or ten minutes at a time. This increases confidence in one's own voice.

Slurring and indistinctness of enunciation may be caused by too great rapidity of speech, or by the failure to sound consonants clearly, owing to insufficient mobility of the vocal organs. The final syllables of words will therefore require particular attention. The daily reading practice ought to be staccato until indistinctness has been replaced by a new habit of crisp utterance.

Nonsense rhymes and the like provide useful practice

as a vowel and consonant corrective ; properly used, they induce crisp accuracy with fluency.

Practice in verse-speaking is a valuable aid to clear enunciation.

(2) A slight raising of the vocal pitch, together with the proper functioning of the lips, will usually suffice to project the voice so as to reach the whole class. Many people fail to utilise the lips as a conscious aid to clear speech. A beginner should practise throwing the voice in a large room—an empty class-room is best—and noting what is necessary to gain the best effects. Hectoring or bawling are not called for. A large proportion of young teachers tend to use the voice with unnecessary strain.

Where an alteration of tone is desired for contrast, say in descriptive work, or for control, a change to a minor key is most effective ; this frequently reaches farther, and is more impressive than the major pitch. Moreover, in exercising control its use may often save the speaker from appearing to have lost his temper. The minor key is also less apt to affect the sensitive child adversely.

(3) Indecision of voice may have a psychological basis (see later). Some people, however, have a natural soft-toned fluency which carries with it a danger all its own. It may produce an effect of indecisiveness from its unchanging smoothness of speech, floating over rather than penetrating the children's consciousness, without power to strike and arrest ; and by its monotonous rise and fall, lulling the pupils into comparative inattention.

The cure is simple, if not altogether easy of application. Be brief. Make every word carry its own weight. Stress the important words. Consciously stop and close the lips after a statement. Only reopen them when compelled to. Practise persistently till

placidity of tone has been replaced by a fluency that is purposeful and incisive.

When all has been done to make the voice the finely tempered instrument it ought to be, it must still be kept in mind that speech is the tool of the personality and can only give of its best when ruled by a wise and well-informed kindliness. In Ruskin's words, "He who hath the truth at his heart, need never fear the want of persuasion on his tongue."

CHAPTER II

CLASS-MANAGEMENT

THE circumstances of class-management alter with different ages, and in varying environments, but the essentials are ever the same. Control is the testing point of personality. One may be master of all the best methods of teaching, but in the absence of good discipline this mastery is all but futile. Sound government is the oil without which the wheels of progress can but stiffly revolve.

To some people, the question of class-management presents no difficulty. For them, the difficulty is to appreciate how it can be so serious a matter for others. But the natural leaders are the first to agree that power to control can be greatly strengthened by a knowledge of its technique, the basis of which is simply common sense.

A clear understanding of the teacher's position may serve to dispel any self-consciousness the beginner may feel on going forward to his first lessons. The teacher is an adult, placed in charge of immature children. They feel that, in comparison with themselves, his knowledge and experience are vast and wide. Further, he represents authority ; he is *in loco parentis* with the scales weighted in his favour.

Class-management, from the present point of view, is a problem of the psychology of the crowd. A class, like a mob, requires a leader, and that leader must be the teacher, if those entrusted to him are to be guided

as a harmonious and well-organised group into the activities necessary for the present and future well-being of each of its members. The earnest teacher merely requires resolution in order to go forward with confidence as the dominant personality in the classroom.

The mental attitude he intends his scholars to adopt towards him must be the young teacher's first consideration. On this point there can be no dubiety. Respect comes first.

Many ardent beginners strive to be too friendly. They set out to win the affection of the young people, and leaving respect to take care of itself, they "come down" to the children and practically ask for liking. A cheap popularity is dear at any price. Children know they are expected to obey ; they know they come to school to learn. Their first reaction to their new teacher is one of suspended judgment. They feel no initial affection for him, for he has not yet proved himself. Probably, being children, they intend to try him out, in much the same spirit as the small boy cuts open his drum to see where the noise comes from. With the affection-first teacher the period of probation is soon over. He himself deliberately reveals his own unsoundness and the pupils quickly recognise him as weak, for he allows conduct which they know should not be permitted. *He has failed to be a leader.*

Such a teacher is soon dubbed opprobriously, and his life in school becomes a purgatory to himself and a danger to his pupils' welfare. A single child when alone with him may answer disrespectfully, because he feels the support of his comrades despite their absence ; the class as a whole will probably come to behave in a way which is an obstacle to their own progress, and a nuisance to neighbouring teachers and pupils. The "soft" teacher

is a bad trainer of character ; he gives the children a poor preparation for life.

Fondling of children in school is another serious error. Not only does it tend to favouritism, but most children of both sexes dislike and resent it.

In particular, any boy who likes it had better be treated otherwise ; it is not coddling he requires.

The teacher, pondering the question, How may I do my best for my pupils ? takes long views. He is ever conscious, not of their moods of the moment,¹ but of their needs, and acts accordingly. Only thus does he win a goodwill which endures. Children, compact of activity and the desire to know, have a strong instinct for hero-worship, but it is given only to the worthy ; it is not offered to the sentimentalist. Nor can it be had for the asking ; it must be earned, for hero-worship is founded upon respect.

It is wise, therefore, to begin by being too firm rather than too tolerant. The young teacher can then ease off gradually, and his pupils will value him the more. Should he attempt to reverse the procedure, he will have before him, in attempting to gain a firm, calm control, a task that may be too much for his resources. In the attempt he may find himself regarded as a bully, and his own confidence in fragments around him.

Equally, the teacher must respect his pupils. It follows that a good and ever-widening understanding of children in all their possibilities and limitations is necessary, if control is to be humane, yet sound.

The learner would do well to study children at first hand, both at work and at play. Memories of his own childhood will prove a valuable aid to his understanding of the young people's reactions. His next step, the reading of books on the psychology of the child, should

¹ See, however, Chapter IX, "The Teacher's First Day."

be taken only when he feels he has exhausted the usefulness of his first-hand study, but such reading should send him back to resume that study with new insight and increased earnestness.

The student who comes to his first teaching practice with the knowledge thus gained can approach the question of class-management with a wise confidence.

Child-study is a lifelong exploration. The beginner who expects to learn, within a year or two, all he need know about children, would be wise to consider whether he may not have mistaken his profession.

The teacher must know his work. Always will he prepare carefully, and with thoroughness, and, by showing himself interested in the lessons and in his pupils, prove himself worthy of attention.

Children cannot be obedient to commands indefinitely, unless they are having adequate instruction or activity. The mere power to have them willing to obey, although a prime essential, does not of itself take teacher and scholars forward on their journey. The engine must run.

There is no more fruitful source of weak control than the ill-prepared or poorly-taught lesson. The teacher who hopes to induce a discipline which is valid gives of his best—always.

The novice may ask, "Will my control be weakened if I happen to blunder?" Obviously, that will depend upon the type of error, and on its handling. When a difficulty arises, any attempt by a teacher to bluff, in order to hide his own ignorance, would probably be perceived by the young people, and he would be regarded with suspicion. Control would definitely weaken, for respect would have gone. If the difficulty is an answer to a child's enquiry, the wise course is frankness, with an offer to find out. Respect will at once be heightened. Children realise

that no one can know everything in the world. On the other hand, if the teacher ought to have known the answer, he is creating his own troubles, by failing to keep abreast of his work.

TECHNIQUE OF CONTROL

The beginner who comes with an informed mind and an alert attitude will find that common sense will solve most of his problems of class-management. It will be advantageous, however, to set out, as deductions from the foregoing, certain rules of procedure.

(1) *Conserve the Voice*

Many young teachers tend to strain the vocal organs. Speech, crisp, distinct, and well-modulated, should be adapted to the acoustics of the room. Tones which re-echo from the wall opposite are overloud. A noisy voice creates and encourages noise in the room. Speak a little above the conversational pitch when addressing a group, but only with sufficient loudness to reach the farthest-off child, clearly and with effect.

Pointed speech pays. Children are soon bored by a flow of unnecessary words, and inattention inevitably results. Further, each statement must have an explicit meaning for the young people. Two examples will illustrate this :

(a) A class is preparing work and there is some noise. The teacher decides that silence is necessary.

Children,¹ keep quiet! only indicates to them the need for minimisation of talk. Voices are lowered—temporarily. A more pointed statement is therefore required.

Children, stop talking! said properly, will be effective. Some, however, may tend to go on talking in a whisper—

¹ Where the prefatory word *Children* is not generally used, some such alternative as *Boys, Class, Please*, may be used.

for, to a child, whispering seems different from talking—and noise soon mounts anew.

Children, close the lips! is explicit. Quietude reigns.

(b) The method of utterance is important. *Children, close the lips!* delivered without pause, is of less arresting power than *Children!—close—the lips!*

The learner may try out this distinction with an order which will probably be given by him on his first day of teaching practice. *Children, sit up!* will cause the well-disciplined class to respond, mildly interested. *Children!—sit—up!* (with emphasis on the last word) will bring the pupils to immediate alertness, and the ensuing lesson should go with a swing.

(2) *Expect Attention*

Give each statement once only and see that the desired result is obtained immediately.

When the response is not satisfactory, the cause may be one or more of the following.

(a) The voice may have lacked decision.

(b) The words may have been too hurriedly pronounced to reach the consciousness of the pupils.

(c) The tones may have been too low to reach everyone, or noise from outside may have interfered.

(d) If the class is already occupied, the teacher may have failed to attract their attention, by omitting the prefatory word, "*Children!*"

(e) The pupils may be too tired to respond with alertness. An over-heated or ill-ventilated room makes for lethargy, and many children get insufficient sleep, especially during the summer months.

(f) An unresponsive child may have been dreaming, with no thought of disobedience.

(g) If an apparent attempt is being made to try out a new teacher, he will, calmly and clearly, warn the class of the necessity of obeying orders. Then he will repeat the order. Should any slackness now occur, his reaction will be prompt and to the point.

N.B.—Where a clear-cut decision is called for, immediate action is imperative. The danger for the young teacher is in delay. Pupils quickly note indecision, and can make a shrewd guess at its implications.

(3) *Check each Misdemeanour immediately*

A beginner is apt to say to himself, "It is only a small thing. I'll wait, and check when a big thing happens." The evil of that error is incalculable. The big thing was exactly that little occurrence. By his misapprehension, that young teacher is in a worse position than when he began, for now his charges know—and know clearly—that he does not know his business.

Special Note.—Never, however, must a child be scolded or punished for inability. He might as well be blamed for the ebb of the tide. A high standard of endeavour should be set and maintained, but it must be compatible with the pupil's powers. Condemnation ought to be meted out for neglect or other misconduct only.

(4) *Teach with an Alert Eye*

The effective use of the eye is one of the teacher's most important assets. Indeed, by its means, he expresses much of the strength of his personality. The eye was given us, not only for knowledge, but for power.

Each pupil ought to feel he is under the direct observation of the teacher; otherwise the former will not receive the full benefit of the instruction; the electric contact between children and preceptor will not be established; and the teacher will not know if each is attending and assimilating. Therefore, in addressing a class, one ought to stand so far back as to see everyone, including those in the front row, without turning the head. A teacher's vigilant eye has, as its corollary, an alert class.

The eye, used with wisdom, may save the young teacher from one of the grave dangers of inexperience ; e.g. it can be very annoying, when one is teaching with enthusiasm, to find a child paying no attention. Momentarily upset, the novice may shout at the child, and thus show he can easily be made irritable. In this way the pupils tend to lose their reliance upon him, for he has shaken the foundations of his own control. The best method of correction has three stages : (a) Keep the eye upon the culprit—while going on with the lesson—until he becomes conscious of the gaze, sits up, and attends. (b) If a fixed gaze will not alone suffice, a pause in speaking is usually effective. (c) Failing with *a* and *b*, one may address the pupil by name, calmly yet sharply.¹ Only when these means are of no avail should the child be shifted to another seat. Should inattention still continue it will be necessary to note carefully whether the pupil is unable to concentrate owing to ill-health or some other serious reason, or is being deliberately disobedient.

(5) *Be Methodical*

Work to a system. Have as few rules as possible,² but each one wise, and essential for the prevailing conditions.

Unnecessary regulations are not only irksome ; their existence tends to obscure the value of those which are vital.

Equally vital is it that the teacher, in insisting on complete obedience to each rule, should himself set the example. Not otherwise can his system serve its purpose as a medium for balanced behaviour and reliable effort.

¹ It is often quite effective merely to take a step towards the offender. The student-teacher will not use this method until he has gained confidence in moving about the room.

² Commands : Give only necessary orders. Never give an order you cannot enforce. Never give an order and neglect to see it carried out. Avoid threats.

(6) *Be Steady*

Stern to-day and slack to-morrow is bad for both pupil and teacher. For the former, such behaviour is the negation of proper training, and for the latter, it carries the dangers of unsatisfactory performance and of increasing irritability. The pupils do not know where they stand, under such vacillating conditions. They are being encouraged to be spasmodic and temperamental, and are ever in a state of venturesome unrest. The "undulating teacher" is even less of a real friend to the children than he who drives always with too slack a rein.

(7) *Allow Reasonable Freedom*

A beginner sometimes tends to be too strict at the wrong time. Healthy children have a natural urge to be active, and must not be kept on the strain too long. A periodic break in the tension is imperative. The class ought, for example, to be granted a two—or even three—minute break between lessons, when remaining in the same room; and the children should then be permitted to talk freely. The time thus lost will be more than regained through better attention during the next lesson. Nor is there any need to be afraid of orderly disorder; at such a time it has a value of its own. The teacher will take care, however, that the breathing space is given by him, and not merely usurped by the class; otherwise he will ultimately be faced with disorderly order at other times, a problem of a totally different kind, against which all his care has been directed.

(8) *Be Just*

The observant reader has noted already that each of the foregoing rules is an adjunct of equity. The young teacher will do well to keep the present rule as an ideal

constantly before him. Even should he incline to be a little severe, he will not err greatly if he is scrupulously fair to each of those under his guidance. Children have a keen sense of justice. "He may be a beast, but he's a just beast,"¹ was a high commendation. In later years, the Just Beast is remembered with pride, and to have been trained under his faithful administration is to have received a badge of merit. A firm, impartial leader is always revered by his pupils.

Inevitably, the beginner will be faced with the danger of favouritism. Some of his young people may seem more likeable than others. His likes and dislikes the teacher must completely conceal. Again, he may tend to make more of his clever pupils than of others. Such conduct is gross injustice ; it is, indeed, crasser stupidity than the dullness² which is, by inference, condemned. The safeguard here is to praise honest effort—wisely, not profusely—in all cases. The intellectual child learns with ease ; he is not always a hard worker.

No tale-bearing must be allowed. Should such an attempt take place in open class, the teacher will arrest the narrative as soon as he is sure of its implication. No second attempt is likely to occur. If the attempt be made secretly, it must be checked with even greater firmness ; and as the days and weeks go by, the teacher will be studying the informer, in order to discover the best means of developing and improving the latter's self-reliance and self-respect.

The young teacher may dread he will misjudge. Of course he will. The person who never made a mistake never made anything. But his young people will exonerate him, if, when he does discover he has con-

¹ Said, by a boy, of the late Archbishop Temple when Headmaster of Rugby.

² See, too, *Special Note*, p. 17.

demned unjustly, he admits his error to the victim—in the hearing of the class. He will not “lose face”; the whole incident will enhance his reputation and increase his efficiency.

After an occurrence such as this, the accused, a boy, 13 years of age, voluntarily replied, “It’s all right, sir! You’ve let me off at other times.” Children can forgive mistakes. They do not pardon injustice.

The biggest danger of error is in over-hasty action, which may easily degenerate into bullying. The teacher is in a privileged, yet peculiarly difficult position, for he is both prosecutor and judge. Ordinary justice demands that he listen with patience and close attention to what a child has to say in his own defence. Thus, the teacher gives himself time to curb his own impetuosity, and to decide calmly upon what is necessary under the circumstances. Above all, the pupils see for themselves that he desires to be fair.

(9) *Trust the Children*

This is the natural complement to Rule 8. It does not mean, however, that the teacher will delegate his powers to those juvenile minds, immature, and without realisation of what life will exact from them. The teacher himself must ever be the dominant personality, leading his charges into a wise self-control.

He will strive, through sound teaching and wise management, to win their willing co-operation, for they will soon realise, by his insistence on pulling them up to his level, instead of his coming down to theirs, that his interest in their progress and well-being is genuine. They will come to appreciate his recognition of their efforts; they will feel a strengthened confidence in their own capabilities and in him.

Any teacher who could not see the good points in his pupils would be unfit for his work. His attitude would depend upon the system, "Thou shalt not," and would lead to threats and undue punishments. His influence upon the children would be in every way vicious.

The beginner's trust in his children, like their confidence in him, must unfold itself slowly and with caution, if it is to attain to real value,¹ and will show itself in varied ways as opportunity offers. It should only be expressed by actions; it is too sacred for speech.

Typical opportunities are here given.

(a) Reasonable freedom (p. 19) and praise, properly expressed, for honest effort (p. 20) are first steps.

(b) It used to be the wretched custom, when a teacher left the room, for a child to be set to watch and report upon the behaviour of the others. If the "spy" reported anyone, the class regarded this as sneaking. Should he fail to report, the teacher looked upon him as untruthful. Truly an invidious position for any child.

A later fashion was to say, "I expect you to sit quiet while I am out." This obviously means, "I do not expect . . ." otherwise it need not be mentioned. The children were not deluded. They felt their teacher was a kind of gaoler, and therefore, according to their code, they were entitled to create a noise.

The correct way is to see that the children have enough to keep them busy, then to go from the room without comment. This has proved entirely satisfactory in instances beyond number.

(c) A more difficult problem arises in the case of misconduct. Where the teacher has *clear*² evidence of a child's guilt, despite the latter's possible protestations of innocence, he must take the necessary stern steps. To do otherwise would seriously damage his control by showing

¹ Cf. p. 13.

² The accused must always receive the benefit of any doubt.

him to be gullible, and would place a premium upon mendacity.

The constant endeavour of the teacher will be, however, to obtain an admission of guilt in cases where there is no dubiety. When he does—the process of evoking frankness may entail months of unwearying patience—he will then say to the culprit, “What are you going to do about it?” On the first occasion, a startled look will be the only response, for the child will have had thrown back upon him the onus of improved behaviour. Until now, he will most probably have regarded that responsibility as the teacher’s. The next question will be, “How are you going to put matters right?” The teacher will now be guided by the answer he receives, which may be, “By doing my work for to-morrow,” or “I don’t know,” or even “I should be punished.” Common sense will dictate the best course, but failing that last answer, the teacher will ask, “And what ought I to do?” Then he will certainly mete out what he considers due—children must be trained to accept the consequences of their volitions—but he will make the punishment as light as is consistent with the child’s need to feel satisfied that he has confessed his crime and taken his due like a man. The teacher’s words, e.g. “That was very honourable of you, So-and-so,” will close the incident, but its effects will be of far-reaching consequence.

The pupils are thus given a new orientation of ideas which may bring about a revolution in their thoughts; and the teacher will be training his young charges for adult citizenship by giving practice in the social responsibility of the individual.

Once the teacher has consolidated his position and has won a willing respect, he will have induced such a spirit in his children that the need for punishment will but seldom occur, and when it does, it will scarcely ever be given unless the child agrees he deserves correction. “But,” says the young teacher, “shall I not be cheated?” Perhaps so, but his ideal of justice will gradually permeate the class. The pupils themselves

will come to feel that any deceitful offender is lowering the whole class, and will themselves deal faithfully with him.

Children's codes of honour differ in many ways from that of the adult, but the teacher must satisfy their inherent craving to be treated as "big"; he must be prepared to recognise that even if an individual may occasionally fail him, his pupils as a whole are worthy of the same high respect from him which he expects from them.

Control is never what it should be until it is effortless.

CHAPTER III

THE STUDENT'S FIRST DAY IN SCHOOL ¹

YOUR mental attitude on approaching the school is of considerable importance. The pupils may know of your coming, and seeing you enter the school, will form their first impressions. A person who walks confidently with a balanced attitude, and asks the way to the headmaster's room, as if he had come on business, will have taken the first steps to show himself a dependable teacher.

Above all, do not attempt to make friends with the children in the playground. They may have had, recently, a student-teacher who has been "soft," and your attempt might thrust you into the same category. If a previous beginner has left a bad legacy, destroy it, and leave a better.

It is normally a safe rule, when one desires to make friends with children, to make approaches with caution. Children are shy beings. It is safer to let the approaches be made by them. Why should they be immediately friendly? How would you yourself treat a stranger who was effusive?

The headmaster will observe you keenly. In all probability, he will require to send to your Training College a written report upon your punctuality and

¹ The remarks in this section are addressed directly to the student. Some points already noted are repeated to make the section complete in itself.

attention to duty, your characteristics, your class-control, and your prospective value as a teacher. First impressions live long. You must be thoroughly alert.

He may simply state where he intends to place you, or he may give a choice. Be prepared for that offer, and have your reasons for your preference. In addition, he may give a few suggestions on the organisation of a school and upon what is expected of you. These hints are valuable. Do not let their worth be dimmed by any preconceived notions culled from books. For the time being he is your principal, with every right to demand your obedience. You can take everything to the bar of reason later.

Should an opportunity occur, you might well offer to assist in playground duty, piano-playing, etc., in addition to your work in the class-room. This will prove an instructive aid; it will make you feel yourself really a member of the staff—although a very junior one; and it will show you are keen to make yourself a proficient teacher.

When taken to the staff-room, remember that any undue delay in reporting yourself ready will be noted—to your detriment.

What was said about crossing the playground applies with greatly increased force to your entrance into the class-room, where you are to act in the subsidiary position of assistant to the class-teacher. Every pair of eyes will be upon you. However shy or nervous you feel, you must try to appear natural and businesslike.

Observation will probably be your first day's work. In that case, ask if you may sit at a desk at the back of the room. It will save you from being tempted to take the teacher's chair, which is not your prerogative, and, in the absence of a second chair, you will have no need to stand. The back is the best position. It saves you from the eyes of the pupils, of whom you possibly feel

uncertain ; it enables you to feel that electric contact which an audience can give, for you will be one of them, not detached as you would be at the front ; and best of all, by taking notes of methods for the various activities, you will keep yourself busy.

Go and help the teacher as soon as any occasion arises. Do not wait to be asked. In particular, whenever individual work begins, assist if need be, with apparatus, and ask if you may go round among the children to observe and correct.

Now comes the crux of your as yet untried discipline. At this time, you have nothing to do with the general control, but it is your responsibility, when helping a pupil, to check anyone immediately at hand who is trifling or turning round to see what you are doing. The foundations of sound control are laid with the first contact. The manner in which you treat the pupils you are actually assisting, and the manner in which you allow them to treat you, will determine the nature of that foundation. Many a student-teacher has established his control before he has taken charge of the class.

Maintain a crisp instructional tone, informed both by kindness and by reserve, and beyond that, do not concern yourself about the feelings of the children. The children will not be concerned about your feelings. If they have become accustomed to having students-in-training, they are very probably wondering how far they may go in taking liberties with you, with safety. Ensure that their attitude to you is one of respect. Do not answer the query of the rude child who asks you if you are a student. Simply, but with calm command—tinged with sharpness—tell him he is forgetting his manners, and see that he proceeds with his work. In addition, insist that each addresses you as “ Sir ” or “ Ma’am,” just as he would the

established teachers. Keep on your guard. When, therefore, your time comes to take the whole class, you will already have won your first brush with the skirmishers, and can approach the main group with confidence.

Suddenly a contingency arises. The teacher is called out of the room. It may be for a moment only, or for a prolonged period. For you, it is the most vital occurrence of your practice in that school. At once, take complete charge of the class—at once! Be calm and purposeful—the pupils will not hear your heart thumping—and let them hear your voice, vital with authority as you rise from your seat and go to the front.

Now continue the teacher's lesson to the best of your ability. If the subject-matter or the method be unfamiliar, attempt nothing new, but simply revise what has already been done. Should the crisis have occurred when a lesson was just over, begin a new one, the next on the time-table if you can, or on a subject chosen by yourself with information in it which will, you feel, be of interest. Come prepared for such an emergency.

The student is expected to take the teacher's place in all emergencies. After his first few days, during which, as noted above, he must be ready for short periods of responsibility, the beginner ought to have made such preparation that he can take over the work of the class, as set out in the time-table, at any time, and if necessary for the whole day.

In the event of the teacher's absence being prolonged beyond the end of your informative lesson, begin another; mental arithmetic or spelling would be a good sequence. With very little ones, try some form of individual work. The important point is to take charge, with power, and keep going.

Just such an emergency occurred with a class of twelve-year-olds. The student, aged 17, had not taught before. No sooner had the teacher left the room than a hubbub began. In a voice that rang with authority—it was really with nervousness—the novice demanded, “What does *this* mean?” Pained surprise at a lost opportunity for fun was depicted on the children’s faces. “Go on with your work—everyone!” The class-teacher came in some twenty minutes later, and found the pupils industrious and quiet, and the student going round assisting.

During the day, take any opportunity which offers to practise writing on the blackboard; it requires practice.

Before leaving in the afternoon, enquire if you may prepare a lesson for next day. If permitted and given a choice of subject, you would be wise to select a recapitulation—i.e. revision, with occasional amplifications—of a lesson heard on this first day. The teacher will lend a book willingly.

Inexperienced though you be, your *précis* of the teacher’s lesson will keep you on the right lines as you revise and expand the subject-matter. With a new lesson, you might go “off the rails” and the teacher would be compelled, in the interests of the children, his principal obligation, to take the instruction out of your hands.

Should the teacher consider you had better wait for a day or two, there is no need to feel abashed. Ask for details of the next day’s work, and at home, prepare a particular lesson for yourself so that you can note in detail—with the greatest possible advantage to yourself—how the teacher himself deals with it. On the succeeding evening, amend your notes, not following your senior slavishly, but taking everything to the bar of reason. These amended notes should be preserved.

Addenda

(1) At any intervals, you will have freedom to go to the staff-room. It is both courteous and wise to remember you are only a bird of passage, and to refrain from any thoughtless action which might cause the regular teachers to feel you have presumed. On your behaviour in the staff-room will, to a great extent, depend, not only your own happiness while in the school, but that of other students to come.

(2) On your second, and every subsequent day, carry on as you have already begun ; better if you can.

When you begin a lesson you have prepared, the teacher will remain in the room, and you may be shy, therefore, to assert your authority. The teacher is certainly entitled to stop your lesson when he considers you have completed as much as you usefully can, or for any reason which seems good to him ; but whether you teach for a long or for a short period, you must let no diffidence obscure the fact that you are in entire charge of the pupils while actually teaching. The control is your responsibility. The teacher will support you if you are thoughtful and firm.

(3) Now read the last note on page 130.

OBSERVATION

Training College Authorities usually require each student to keep a record book for observations made during teaching hours. The headmaster and the class-teacher have the right to examine this book.

For immediate use in school, however, and in particular during the first few weeks of teaching practice, it is advisable to keep an unofficial note-book for entering essential points in chronological order. Much will be registered mentally, but details had

best be written. Memory is a fickle jade. These notes should be transferred, daily, into the official record book, arranged in logical order.

Everything which may seem of future service should be entered. No point of method, however trivial it may at first appear, is unimportant. The following headings are suggestive.

I. Teaching Methods

- (a) Average age of pupils.
- (b) Subject-matter of each lesson in detail—in order to learn what is possible at this stage.
- (c) Introduction of lessons or of new points—i.e. the connection between the known and the unknown.
- (d) Description—language used—explanations of difficulties—intermingling with questions.
- (e) Questions—their various forms (note especially the interrogative word)—how and when introduced.
- (f) Utilisation of answers, to forward the development of the lesson.
- (g) Use of blackboard—summary of main points—copies of sums, sentences, drawings, etc.
- (h) Revision—incidental, medial, final—to drive home the salient points.
- (i) Suggestion—use made of it to encourage children towards discovery for themselves.

Obviously, all these cannot be grasped in one day, nor in a few, but by sedulous application, an appreciation of each point will gradually be won, and improved confidence will accompany exact knowledge.

When one has become familiar with the atmosphere of the class-room, it would be well, without entirely losing sight of other matters, to concentrate upon one

main aspect of technique each day. The observations made, along with one's own deductions and conclusions, should be added to the day's record in the official book. Reliance upon memory will not serve. The mind becomes too overcrowded to keep in the forefront all the details one would fain have ready for use.

On page 66, a method is suggested by which questions may be usefully observed. The thoughtful reader will invent for himself a useful mode of approach to other points.

II. *Reflections*, after one's first attempt at giving a lesson, will naturally follow the realisation that the art of teaching demands a surprisingly high degree of skill. Points of technique will now have a personal significance, and will assume new relative values. These will vary with the individual, but the following are probably the most general considerations at this stage.

- (1) The teacher's manner in relation to interest and attention.

The use of the voice, in order to arrest and to hold.

The value of the eye, for animation and for control.

- (2) The difficulty of appropriate, precise diction.
- (3) Questioning ; and how to follow up answers without being side-tracked from the main theme.
- (4) When one ought to stop.

Some of these problems have been touched upon in the foregoing pages ; some are dealt with later ; but it cannot be too strongly urged upon the novice to take every opportunity of puzzling out his perplexities for himself.

III. *Additional Points* will be noted as occasion offers.

- (a) Methods of changing from one lesson to another. Note relaxation permitted to increase the value of the next lesson.
- (b) Apparatus (books, individual-work materials, etc.).
Note title, author, publisher, size, price of books, and stages for which they are suitable. Note, also, orderly procedure of distribution—and of collection—for economy of time, and for inducing orderliness of mind in the children.
- (c) Methods of entering and leaving the room when schoolwork begins and ends.
- (d) School organisation.
- (e) Copy of the class time-table and of the syllabus in each subject.

IV. *Child-study* at first hand—first, last, and all the time.

Initially, the class will appear to the beginner simply as a group. Soon a few of the children will stamp themselves on his mind as distinct personalities. Gradually, he will come to know each one in the room; he will learn their names¹—the sooner the better—and then the class will have become for him a group of known individuals who will excite and hold his interest, and compel him—for they are the justification of his own presence among them—to observe them carefully in all their activities, so that by their reactions² they may teach him much that he will not learn from books.

¹ The register might be used for this purpose during a lesson, yet without waste of time.

² Much that cannot be understood from children's behaviour in the class-room can be comprehended from observation in the playing-grounds.

OFFICIAL RECORD BOOK

The contents of this book, which are subject to close scrutiny by those in charge of the learner's practical training in the schools, depend upon the student's own wisdom, and will reveal him in a way in which his actual teaching may not. The book will tell if he is keenly observant, orderly minded, and able to differentiate the important and permanent from what is trivial or of only transient effect. It will also show the strength or the weakness of his day-by-day ability.

When the training course is over the newly qualified teacher *will take his record book with him*, as a store-house of useful method hints, to which he may refer often, particularly during his first few months of responsible teaching.

These memoranda must be clear and pointed. Vague statements have no value. Students who have recorded mistakenly have later found themselves saying, "I wish I could remember such and such a lesson, or had kept clearer notes of it." Pointed detailed work pays. In particular, a record in full detail should be preserved of each lesson taught by oneself, and of all those given by others as demonstrations.

Below is an example of how a student's record book might read :

SCHOOL :	DATE :
AGE : 8½ (average)	HOURS : 8.50 A.M.-3.30 P.M.

LESSONS

Observed
 Arithmetic
 Spelling
 Drill
 Reading

Taught
 History (revision)
 Geography

Lessons Observed

(1) ARITHMETIC.—The teacher put on the blackboard a square of figures, e.g.

6	7	4	1	2
2	5	6	8	9
7	3	1	2	4
9	4	5	3	6

The whole class stood. The teacher would point to one line either horizontal or vertical, and as soon as each child had added it up he sat down. The keen competition among the children not to be left standing when the majority were seated, made them work harder.

The teacher then began problems, e.g. By how much is 129 greater than 96? To illustrate, she asked how much greater 5 was than 2, and was told the answer was obtained by subtraction.

(2) SPELLING.—On the blackboard were put words which had caused difficulty in the composition, e.g. presents, invitation, accepts. The pupils spelt each word three times and had three further words to learn at home for next day. All the words were written down in jotters by the pupils.

Hint.—The teacher pointed out to me that no word can be regarded as being thoroughly known unless it has been correctly used in writing *in sentences* by the pupils individually.

(3) DRILL.—This was taken as last day. The game given was "Overhead Ball." Some of the children do not yet know how to keep their heads up. Many lift their shoulders instead. I helped by showing individuals the right way.

(4) READING FOR COMPREHENSION.—It was a new story for the children, and the teacher first turned to the picture. She asked them what the story would be about, and spent five minutes creating an atmosphere for the lesson. Four paragraphs were taken. While the teacher insisted on accuracy and good phrasing, she seemed to aim chiefly at the story. After each paragraph had been read, she asked

a few questions on what the story had told us, and then led on to the next one by using such questions as, "What will happen next?" or "What will the elves do now?"

At one point I observed that the teacher got the children to deduce from the context, almost without help, the meaning of a phrase new to them.

Hint.—In discussing a picture, e.g. one with animals, make your approach from activities to appearances,¹ not vice versa; remember how? why? result?

Lessons taught

(1) HISTORY.—This was unprepared, and was a revision of "The Coming of the Vikings." The teacher told me to be sure to fill any gaps I found. I tried to do so, but in trying to use the answers the children gave me I found myself losing the thread of the story and wandering aside too much.

Hint from the Teacher.—Build up a synopsis of the lesson on the blackboard as you go. It prevents wandering.

(2) GEOGRAPHY.—Prepared. Subject: "Tributaries."
(The complete notes are given as usual at the back of the book.)

Hint from the Teacher.—I did not make sufficient use of local knowledge.

¹ Cf. p. 44 (2).

CHAPTER IV

PREPARATION OF LESSONS

LESSON-PREPARATION is discussed here, before "Explanation," "Questioning," etc., to encourage the beginner to think and to plan for himself. If he would be a real teacher, he must put initiative first, assistance second. He who reverses the process is on the way to becoming a merely routine teacher, however clever he may become as a craftsman, and of his own free-will is making himself the thrall of his environment.

NOTE.—*Before reading this section, the beginner is recommended to discover his own powers and shortcomings (and so to realise how much is required in the way of technique before even comparative skill as a teacher can be acquired) by preparing at least one lesson from the following list :*

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| (1) The Composition of "5" to infants. | |
| (2) David and Goliath to age | $7\frac{1}{2}$ |
| (3) Geography (local) | " $8\frac{1}{2}$ |
| (4) Vulgar Fractions | " $9\frac{1}{2}$ |
| (5) Clive in India | " 10 |
| (6) Hibernation | " $10\frac{1}{2}$ |
| (7) Oral Composition | " $11\frac{1}{2}$ |

These lesson-notes should then be retained for later comparison and amendment.

Summarised, the chief points requiring attention in lesson-preparation are these :

- I. The stage of the pupils.
- II. The aim of the lesson.
- III. The Subject-matter.
- IV. The Method.
- V. Memorising.

I. *The stage of the pupils.*—In this connection, the duration of the lesson is of great importance.

The following is recommended :

Infants	10 to 15 minutes.
Ages 7-9	15 „ 20 „
Ages 9-11 +	20 „ 30 „
Secondary classes	30 „ 40 „

Beyond these times the children cannot concentrate fully. If the time-limit is ignored, the dragging of the lesson may ruin the one which follows, with disappointment to the teacher and much harm to the pupils. Faulty impressions are easily registered on tired brains.

See also “Time-Table,” page 112.

II. The *aim* of the lesson is all-important.

“An aimless lesson” would be a contradiction in terms. Were such attempted, it would bewilder pupils and teacher with wandering wisps of information. It would most certainly not take them along the path on which it is the teacher’s privilege to guide his children, and with their help to erect thereon signposts of thought and of memory for them as they go.

The universal aim of all school education has already been defined (see p. 3). It follows that the general aim in teaching any of the subjects chosen as media of

instruction, and the particular aim of each lesson within that subject, must be directed in accordance with that universal purpose.

Amid all the distractions of subjects and their details, it must ever be borne in mind that the teaching of subjects is not an end in itself; our goal is the training of the children.

Students in training are usually required, therefore, when writing out notes for a lesson, to state clearly and concisely both the general and the particular aims. The following examples, taken from students' notes thus prepared, will serve to illustrate the value of this injunction :

DRAWING : A SNOW-MAN

Average age 6.

(a) *Particular*.—To draw a snow-man with crayons as a sequel to an intelligence lesson on "Snow."

(b) *General*.—To train the children to observe and to apply.

READING FOR COMPREHENSION

Average age 8+.

(a) *Particular*.—Creation of interest in new matter by understanding of language and context.

(b) *General*.—Training children to read with understanding, to encourage them to read for themselves, and so to widen their horizons.

(See also p. 42, *Special Note*.)

DIVISION, USING MONEY

Average age 9.

(a) *Particular*.—To give practice in working and in careful setting-out of these sums, so as to rectify habitual errors.

(b) *General*.—To train in accuracy, and in methodical arrangement, through number.

NATURE STUDY

Average age 10-10+.

(a) *Particular*.—To acquire knowledge concerning water and its changes (vapour, clouds, rain, snow, etc.).

(b) *General*.—Training pupils to observe, and to make deductions for themselves.

UNITARY METHOD

Average age 10-10+.

(a) *Particular*.—Showing the method and its value in dealing with problems in proportion.

(b) *General*.—Developing logical thought and power of comparison.

Two great principles govern the fixation of the particular aim.

(1) All progress is from the known to the unknown. Each lesson must, therefore, be based upon the child's previous knowledge, and so must connect with the immediately preceding work in the subject to which the lesson belongs. The younger the pupils, the more clearly and the more completely must this connection be made.

Inattention, carelessness, lack of accuracy, and even, it may be, a child's reputation for stupidity, may all result from the existence of gaps in the sequence of his knowledge.

(2) The aim must be single. The beginner does not always realise the limited powers of his pupils. Through anxiety or ambition, he tends to attempt too much in each lesson, the children lose sight of essentials in an excess of details, and the ground has to be traversed afresh to make a well-defined path through the maze.

A full understanding of what constitutes a teacher's work will aid greatly in reinforcing these two considerations.

A lecturer may mention a matter once, and leave his adult hearers to pursue it further for themselves. The teacher must train as well as teach. For every lesson on new matter he will require to have several revisions, recapitulations from various angles, and many periods of practice before the training has even a semblance of completeness.

For example :

(a) Where the subject-matter is new to the children, one will aim at a clear understanding, with the main facts well defined and stressed.

(b) In a second lesson on the same matter, the object will be recapitulation—revision of the essentials of the initial lesson and widening of the children's knowledge and comprehension by means of additional detail.

(c) Another lesson may be a brief period of revision—as in arithmetic or spelling—to enable the children to acquire the foundations of mechanised memories.

(d) A further period may be one of individual activity by the pupils, who will be applying and utilising what has already been taught and revised.

(e) Here, the idea may be to introduce thoughts suggestive of widened horizons, to induce the young people to go out on mental explorations for themselves.

The thoughtful beginner, realising that the time allotted to new work and to consolidation is approximately in the proportion of one to nine, will see the danger of confusion in this multiplicity of reiteration, and will endeavour to develop for himself a planned scheme of revision in each subject, founded on clearly defined aims sighted upon the requirements of his pupils.

Special Note.—A difficulty inherent in such lessons as “Reading for comprehension” illustrates forcibly the necessity for a single direct aim in each lesson, and for a clearly defined scheme of revision. The very title of the lesson, suggesting a double intention,¹ not infrequently causes the novice, with a book before him, to attempt training in fluency, in comprehension, and perhaps too in spelling, all in one and the same period. Such an attempt leads nowhere. It confuses the children, because the student himself began with a confusion of purposes, which, although no doubt complementary, require treatment essentially dissimilar.

It will be time enough to deal with fluency, with spelling, with utilisation of new words and phrases in sentences, and with practice in composition, during second and later revisions. One must be content, in a first lesson, with the understanding of the story by the children.

III. *Subject-matter*

The class-teacher may leave a lesson incomplete, to be resumed next day. The student in training will normally require to treat “lesson” and “period” as conterminous, and must keep the duration of his lessons strictly within the time-limits recommended on page 38.

(a) The first requisites are a clear understanding of the pupils’ attainment in relation to the selected subject, and a copy of the class text-book. The teacher will willingly supply both. When no text-book is in use, he will suggest an alternative.

(b) A précis made from the text-book or its alternative will enable the main points of the lesson to be readily deduced; these will, in turn, form the basis of the blackboard summary. (See p. 96.)

A sound introduction and a fitting conclusion complete the outline. This should now be scrutinised to

¹ In some areas the difficulty is still further increased by the use of the term “Reading and Intelligence.”

ensure that it is a unity and that it is in harmony with the intended aim of the lesson.

(c) Under the various headings, the appropriate details should next be added from the text-book or from one's own background of knowledge.

(d) The beginner may now feel his subject-matter has been completed, but this apparent sufficiency is deceptive. The lesson is not to be given as a lecture ; it is to be taught. Questions are to be asked and answers will require handling with ready care. Obviously then, wide and thoughtful reading is essential in order to ensure a systematised knowledge which is proof against all emergencies.

(e) Apparatus should be considered and arranged for in good time.

The subject-matter is now ready. Its preparation has entailed much thoughtful care. Much greater care and skill must be given to its presentation.

IV. *Method*

The immaturity of the children determines the teacher's method. They are unable to maintain their attention unbroken for long periods and must therefore be given opportunities of activity and of co-operation, as far as the matter will permit. The novice will investigate all possibilities along these lines as his experience opens up opportunity, but meantime he will find his logical procedure is to intermingle explanation and questioning.

These two are dealt with later, but the earnest student will complete the preparation of his lesson, for his own ultimate benefit, before looking for their assistance.

(A) *The introduction* should create an atmosphere which will stimulate the children's innate urge to know and to do. The best means is a natural connection with

their previous knowledge, clearly and effectively made, so that they can without any dubiety see the intention of the lesson.

This beginning should be brief. Even when the nature of the subject-matter demands a little revision practice, the latter should not be long continued; otherwise, the pupil's keenness will be blunted, and the work will suffer.

An introduction much too lengthy, and out of proportion to the main theme, is a mistake frequently made by learners. The time-factor is forgotten, and the result is a tadpole lesson, mainly preface, and with but little body. The effect on the children of this unwise selection is bad. They naturally tend, even well into the age of adolescence, to lose themselves among details. One of the main correctives for this is the daily influence of the teacher who can go straight to essentials.

Suitable introductions are here illustrated.

(1) *An arithmetic lesson introducing the idea of the £ to a young class.*

The beginning is simple revision, to refresh memories and correct misconceptions, e.g. How many farthings in one penny? . . . pennies in a shilling? . . . Soon the teacher is ready to go on to an addition sum on the black-board, using shillings and pence, the answer to which will necessitate a consideration of the £.

For a lesson involving money problems with an older class, the initial step would perhaps be a brief revision of the aliquot parts of £. Then, "Now let me see if you would make good business people" will precede the giving of the first problem.

(2) *A reading lesson with new matter.*

(a) If a picture accompanies the story, the former will be examined and discussed, e.g. : "What (or whom) do we see in the picture?" "What is happening?" "What do you think the story will tell us?"—"Now let us read to find out."

(b) In the absence of such an illustration, the title may be examined and similar investigations made.

(c) When the matter is a portion of an unfinished lesson, a brief revision of the essential facts will serve to re-create the desired atmosphere.

(3) *A geography lesson introducing Canada.*

(a) The teacher may make use of any previous knowledge from a recent lesson, e.g. : " We heard of General Wolfe the other day. Which town did his soldiers capture ? " " In which country is Quebec ? " " Where is it ? "—and the main theme is reached after an effective introduction of only a few moments.

(b) A very simple and direct beginning would be made by saying, " To-day, we are going to hear about a part of the world called Canada. Can anyone tell us where it is ? " Then, " Which would be the best way to reach it from here ? "

(c) A useful prelude—but see caution below—one which will also be training the children to observe and explore, would be to say on the day before the projected lesson, " In a shop window in ——— Street (only a street convenient to the school should be chosen), there is something which has been brought from a part of the world called Canada." The teacher could then begin his lesson next day by enquiring : " What did you see in the window I mentioned ? " It is probably apples ; some at least of the pupils will have seen them. " How were they brought here ? " " How might *we* travel to Canada ? " Later in the lesson he will refer to and discuss what was seen in the window.

This type of opening is not to be recommended until the student has had a fair test of his ability to ask questions. In the present example he might easily through inexperience ask the third question wrongly, and be quite thrown out of his intended path. Further, his need to refer to the apples at a later part of the lesson would tend to be a distraction.

(d) The skilful and experienced teacher's first question might be, " Does anyone know anything about a

part of the world called Canada?" He would then proceed to develop the lesson along the lines suggested by the pupils' replies.

This is much too severe a task for the beginner. He must not risk throwing open a lesson in this way until he has made a thorough study of questioning, and has acquired a high degree of skill in the utilisation of answers. Examples (c) and (d) above have been given, however, to show the ideal towards which the student must strive.

(B) *Development*.—The method of approach to the first and to each subsequent main point of the lesson is simply the method of the introduction reapplied, with this difference, that since part at least of the matter will be new to the children, explanation must sometimes take the place of interrogation.

The novice's chief difficulty then will be, "When ought I to tell, and when question?" The answer is twofold.

(a) Long spells of description should be avoided.

(b) It is normally a safe rule to refrain from giving when one can reasonably elicit.

At times, the teacher deliberately—and wisely—breaks this rule. A certain statement may be the crux of a lesson, or may be the connecting link on which further lessons depend, and therefore, in the interplay of question and answer may be easily misapprehended by his immature charges. Alternatively, after this interplay, the instructor may feel the topic requires to be summed up with great precision; he may therefore declare: "This is very important. I am going to give it again, and you will all repeat it three times after me."

As an instance the student will doubtless call to mind the important rule to which the teacher would be referring were the lesson above an arithmetic one dealing with problems involving the price of 12 articles.

An example of deliberate giving by the teacher will also be found in the English composition lesson detailed on pages 113-14.

After he has gone over each section of the lesson and has decided where to describe, when to question, and what to put upon the blackboard, the beginner has still to prepare each descriptive passage in words suited to his pupils ; he has to decide the questions he will use ; and he must try to anticipate the answers he will receive, so that they may be utilised to further the development of the lesson.

A latent danger awaits the novice who considers he can safely dispense with this refinement of preparation. In the ordeal of facing a group of pupils with every eye upon him, his fluency may fail him or an answer may draw him irretrievably from his path, unless a well-informed memory is at hand to guide him past the snares.

The preparation is now almost complete. Two further considerations claim attention.

(1) *Revision* is essential. The children are endowed with varying abilities, and being comparatively unknown to the student, will require—in his earlier lessons at least—to be treated as a group. Resting-places must therefore be given at intervals during each period of instruction. This can be done in three ways.

Incidental revision will be used throughout the lesson, by means of a question or two, to reaffirm an important point, or to arrest the attention of a wanderer ; e.g. " Where did we say he had gone ? " " Why did he go ? " " What is he now about to attempt ? " The last question will always, as here, bring the pupils back to the point at which the digression had been made.

Medial revision, as its name indicates, will be used intermediately to ensure the consolidation of what has

been done, before utilising it as the stepping-off place for further exposition. The slow must be prevented from straggling. This revision might be done in a variety of ways, many of which the thoughtful student will gradually discover for himself. For the beginner, however, the best way is the simplest, namely : " We'll take a rest here, and look back to see what we've discovered." Questions are asked which stress the chief points already noted, and then one can say : " Now we are ready to go on again."

Final, like medial revision, offers wide scope for efficient variety, but again the novice will at first take a simple method ; e.g. the blackboard can now be cleared and the summary remade with the children's help. The questions will now be framed to elicit only the cardinal factors.

(2) *Suggestion*—A lesson may be soundly prepared and taught in strict accordance with accepted methods, yet it will, for the young people, have but a restricted value unless it points forward to new vistas. Education from the teacher's point of view indicates " I lead out." Innumerable means exist in school-life by which the pupils may be tempted to explore for themselves¹ ; the best of these is suggestion.

The most convenient method for the beginner is to reserve his allusion to what the pupils can deduce or discover for themselves, until after the final revision, so making the suggestion the last statement.

Suggestion and revision, both medial and final, should now be entered in their appropriate places on the student's prepared notes of the lesson. These are now complete.²

As an example of how such preparation-notes in their final form may appear, the lesson on Canada referred to

¹ See *Reaching the Individual*, p. 139.

² See, however, smaller print, p. 50.

on p. 45 is here used for pupils aged 10-11. The main points only are given ; the aim, the details, and the black-board summary are matters for the beginner's own ingenuity.

FIRST LESSON ON CANADA

(A) *Children's previous knowledge :*

The British Isles.

Europe, treated generally.

(B) *The Lesson :*

Introduction.....	Method.....
.....
.....
(1) School to port	„
Atlantic—sight of land
.....
.....
(Revision)	(„)
(2) Newfoundland—fog	„
—fishing
Gulf—river—Quebec—
Wolfe
(3) St Lawrence
(Revision of (2) and (3))	(„)
(4) Montreal—distance	„
from sea
—activities
(Final Revision)	(„)

*Suggestion.*¹—(a) Next day we shall discover more about Montreal. That will make us travel all over Canada.

(b) I should like you to think out for yourselves why Montreal grew into a big town *just at that spot*.

¹ (a) will attract the enthusiastic pupils. The less bright have been given in (b) a very pointed direction. The suggestion will lose much of its interest and value for the children if it is made to seem a compulsory task.

Blackboard Summary



(C) *Next lesson proposed :*

Physical Features of Canada — beginning with Montreal—its exports—their sources ; natural divisions and climate.

V. *Memorising.*

This is the final step in preparation. The whole lesson—both matter and method—should be so learnt as to become a part of the learner's permanent knowledge. Had he notes before him when teaching, he would to a great extent lose the confidence of his pupils, for he would be showing he lacked confidence in himself.

The best plan for memorising is to “teach” the lesson beforehand in a room alone ; i.e. to visualise the class, to use the voice with the modulations required in teaching, and to go through the lesson exactly as it is to be taught. Practice should be continued until notes are superfluous—until, indeed, the learner feels that nothing short of an earthquake will distract him when the actual lesson begins.

During this “shadow-teaching,” the beginner will try to test the time his lesson will take with his class. He may find he has over- or under-estimated the quantity required, and will amend his notes accordingly.

These notes should be preserved, but they should not be copied into the student's official record book until after the lesson has been taught, when the improvements can be made which experience dictates.

Written notes are not a mere formality. They help the student to focus and to define with exactness his matter and his methods. The beginner who attempts to dispense with notes in his preparation is refusing assistance which he himself can supply.

Everything is now ready for the beginner to go forward with confidence. He will not find his task half so difficult as he expects. The answers given to three questions asked by former student-teachers may help him.

(a) "Am I expected to remember every statement and every question I have prepared?"

Assuredly you will not, but you will have become so well acquainted with your matter and your method, and will have won such a freedom in handling them, that common-sense will readily supply what the memory fails to give.

(b) "If the class-teacher corrects me in front of the class for a mistake I have made, how should I act?"

The teacher's first care is for the children; you come second, because you are more mature. Neither take umbrage nor feel embarrassed. Thank the teacher courteously and openly, then to the pupils say frankly: "I'm sorry, children. I made a slip there," or, if the mistake has been failure to see the good idea behind an apparently wrong answer, "I'm sorry, children. I did not see that point." Your behaviour will redound to your credit. The authority of the class-teacher will have been heightened in the eyes of the pupils, and your own not a whit lowered.

(c) "Is nervousness beforehand a sign of weakness?"

Initial anxiety is natural. Its absence might connote a lack of the vivid imagination which is necessary for the best work. Your supervisors will understand. All who have to do with your practical training have travelled the road you are on. Their criticism will be constructive, and will be given with an appreciation of earnest endeavour.

CHAPTER V

DESCRIPTION

THE preparation of lessons as detailed in the preceding chapter may appear to consume an inordinate length of time. All beginnings are difficult and some laborious. Exertions made at the start of one's training course will repay themselves a thousandfold, and succeeding lessons will be approached with increasing facility as experience brings ever nearer a sound command of technique. The main factor in that mastery is the power to describe with ready skill.¹

Description affects all subjects, and includes all occasions for speech. Within its orbit come commands, explanations, questions, and the utilisation of answers. The first has already been discussed ; the others are dealt with below.

All the teacher's utterances, then, whether considered beforehand, or made on the spur of the moment, concern us here. The latter naturally constitute the greater proportion, including, as they do, incidental orders and statements, and supplementary questions and explanations which have to be framed without previous preparation. The teacher's duties, therefore, demand a habit of correct speech.

Speech which, outside the school, is normally sprinkled with colloquialisms and even slang will inevitably reveal its flaws in the class-room, particularly in times of stress,

¹ Many students suffer at first from the fatal delusion that each of us is endowed with the power to describe with effect.

with deleterious effects upon the training of the pupils, and upon the respect shown by them for the speaker. The pupils themselves are the teacher's most severe critics.

Again, many children come from homes where dialect is spoken, or where Standard English is at a discount. The school may be their only adequate source of hearing and learning correct language. Carelessness on the part of the teacher, therefore, will give a faulty criterion, and the children, through unconscious or deliberate imitation, may, in later life, find their opportunities for success seriously diminished.

Each pronouncement should be pointed and concise. The first requisite for this is an absolutely clear understanding of the subject-matter. This of itself compels painstaking preparation for all lessons. A distorted lens cannot show a true picture.

E.g. "Gold is found in large *masses* termed nuggets." This, said by a young teacher, was found during revision to have given the children some queerly warped ideas.

The second essential is a wide and thorough knowledge of our language, in order to follow the *via media* between the Scylla of ragged explanations and the Charybdis of a periphrastic fluency.

The student, although perhaps feeling he has already an extensive knowledge of the mother tongue, requires to concentrate upon its structure and upon the connotations of its vocabulary, if he is to use it to full advantage. As a teacher in the elementary or preparatory school, it will not only be his chief medium of instruction, but he will require to teach it to others.

Nouns, whether occurring as words, phrases, or clauses, require careful consideration in their meanings and applications; the varying positional usages of adjectives and adverbs must be equally well known; but most of all, the teacher must be able to play freely with the tenses of verbs in all their varieties and shades of meaning. A language is not known until its verbs are fully learnt.

A restricted working vocabulary can be widened only by thoughtful persistence. A necessary method, after each passage of descriptive matter in lesson-preparation has been written out, is to test each term for accuracy. The search for adequate expression will itself do much to enlarge the vocabulary at one's command. The instructor learns through teaching. During his general reading also, the "restricted" student should have a dictionary at hand, and all unfamiliar words should be carefully entered in a notebook kept specially for this purpose. Practice in developing one part of speech from another is a further means of enlarging one's working vocabulary and of attaining to greater facility of expression.

Periphrastic fluency may spring from a deficiency of vocabulary. In very many cases, also, it is due to ignorance of the power and exact meaning of the individual word. This verbosity may indicate, too, a tendency to apprehend only superficially and to ignore the importance of essential details while remaining uneasily aware of their existence; or it may proceed from self-consciousness and lead to a habit of thinking aloud. It then, as a rule, signifies lack of restraint and of the power to select wisely.

Whatever the cause, the results for the pupils are extremely serious. The efforts of the prolix interpreter, however earnest, lead to boredom and confusion. It was not a stupid child who replied, "I understood it until the teacher explained it."

The remedy lies solely in the resolute efforts of the individual to eradicate the cause. The following hints may help:

(a) Write out each descriptive passage in full when preparing lessons. Next, revise it, eliminating all unnecessary words. Now re-read it to ensure that the description is clear. Finally, ask a friend who uses a lucid, direct style to test its pointedness.

(b) Take time to think when giving a lesson. Close the lips after each statement and pause slightly. Children normally think more slowly than their teacher, who has come prepared; they will benefit greatly from the pause.

(c) Oral reading of children's story-books, persistently practised, helps towards directness of style.¹

Thus far our examination of Description may be said to have concerned the strictly subjective aspects. They can be attended to before the student takes his place in the class-room. The objective aspects have yet to be studied.

EXPLANATION

(1) The soundness of the connection between the known and the unknown,² whether made by question or by statement, is the test of all description. Obviously, it is not sufficient to give bald facts. These alone, correct as they may be, will not of themselves stimulate the pupils and gain their willing co-operation. Human interest must play its part. The appeal of apt illustration which fits into their own canvas of life is required, to encourage them to give of their best. Carefully chosen picturesque details germane to the lesson must be added if the picture is to live. The ability to explain is the core of the power to teach.

"Find the price of 43 articles at 1s. 8d. each" will not have the same appeal as "Find what it would cost for reading-books for 43 pupils of this class at 1s. 8d. each."

Again, a class of six-year-olds will be greatly interested in the life of the Eskimo; igloo, ice-hole, etc., will appeal to their sense of wonder. Speak of these people to ten-year-olds and they may be rather indifferent; they feel they know all this. Yet suggest our summer with its warm days and its holidays; ask the pupils if they would wish to be as the Eskimos; and enquire why, then, these do not move south. The pupils' brows will be wrinkled in

¹ Rudyard Kipling and Robert Louis Stevenson are especially useful.

² Cf. (A), p. 43.

thought, for interest will be reborn as they puzzle out how the Eskimo became entangled in the ice-clad web of the north.

Comparison is a most potent factor in explanation. It is almost as old as language itself; in all probability it preceded the adjective. It has endured because, through the association of ideas, it evokes pictures. Such comparisons as "He was as tall as a lamp-post" and "He rushed at me like a dog" come readily to the lips of children. For the teacher, the simile or the metaphor is a most helpful means to illustrations that arrest, and which serve his purpose because they are both effective and concise.

"Horatius stood as firm as a rock."

"Edward I was the hammer of the Scots."

"A level sheet of snow stretched to the horizon."

(2) Severity of selection must result from the need to keep to the aim of the lesson. All irrelevant matter, attractive though it be, must be rigorously excluded; it may come into a recapitulation or it may be very useful in another connection, but it has no place in the lesson itself. Superfluous facts are like the peas in the shoes; they cripple the lesson.

E.g. (a) Wrong explanation, introducing bewildering extraneous matters:

"The ships were at last ready after long delay—and delays are always wearisome, aren't they?—and were commencing their journey. They were small of course, as all ships were in those days, compared to our modern liners which are made ever larger and larger. As they put up the sails and slowly passed the end of the harbour, the men who were setting out on this great adventure cheered as they passed, and the people watching from the harbour . . ."

Correct explanation, showing sharp selection:

"The ships were now ready. The men on board gave a hearty cheer as their small sturdy sailing vessels passed out of the harbour. The people on the pier cheered and waved in reply. The long voyage of adventure had begun."

(b) In a history lesson, a beginner mentioned Llewelyn, asked for its spelling, had finally to give it himself, after quite a time spent explaining the Welsh double "L," and found the lesson had become disjointed and unsatisfactory. "Llewelyn" should simply have been written on the blackboard by the instructor. Spelling was not the intention of the lesson.¹

NOTE.—The student - in - training, beginning to realise all that he has to acquire, and visualising the days when he will be a responsible teacher, may have grave doubts as to his ability to do all that his syllabus demands. The beginner who is thoughtful need have no doubts. Syllabuses are practical, not idealistic. The necessary economy of time will be ensured by a wise selection in explanation.

(3) "Each utterance only once" is a precept that follows naturally from severity of selection. Its implications are discussed under "Repetition," below.

(4) Language must be appropriate to the pupils' comprehension.

This is not so easy to accomplish as it may at first appear. In particular, the graduate, after spending the immediately preceding years on high intellectual levels, finds to his surprise that language quite simple for himself is utterly beyond his pupils.

Four examples are here given of suitable language.

(a) For age 5 :

"The way to school is down the lane, past the church, up the street, and round by the corner shop. When the sun is shining, they go another way home, round by the fields and the little wood."

(b) For age 7-8 :

"She was so old that she had very little hair, and very

¹ See p. 59, and "Blackboard," p. 100.

few teeth. Her head trembled like the leaves which are stirred by the wind, and she could scarcely see at all, even with the aid of her glasses."

(c) For age 9-10 :

"She had quick bright eyes and a little red mouth that was like a ripe cherry. Her black hair was smoothly brushed, and always adorned with gay flowers, while on the wide sleeves of her yellow silk frock sprays of blossom were skilfully worked."

(d) For age 11+ :

"In the meantime I took possession of the captured man-of-war ; and Captain Wilmot made me, or rather I made myself, captain of her for the present. About thirty of their seamen took service with us ; and we set the rest on shore the next day, except some wounded men who were not in a condition to be removed."

The student, on his first day of teaching-practice, is advised to borrow a copy of the class reading-book, or that of the class immediately below, and by careful perusal of it to acquire familiarity with the language and mode of expression suitable at that stage. The lower book is recommended where the beginner feels he is apt to make his language too difficult.

On the other hand, while language must be sufficiently simple, with every word carrying its own weight, the pupils ought not to be made to feel that the instructor is talking down to them. Children, as we have already noted, want to feel big ; that instinct is the source of their hero-worship. The student must, therefore, have such a familiarity with the appropriate language that all explanations are made freely and naturally. A slight erring on the side of simplicity, however, will be the best beginning ; experience and common-sense will make the necessary correction.

This brings us back to the need for a refinement of preparation, during which the learner will strive to

think in the language he is to use before the class. He who attempts to prepare a lesson in a language too difficult for the children, with the intention of teaching in a simpler one, is merely digging for himself a pit to fall into before the class. Such dangers can be obviated in every instance by a careful scrutiny of the completed notes of the lesson—before memorising is begun—with the purpose of rewriting where the language may seem too difficult.

NOTE.—Despite all his care, the novice may inadvertently introduce a word beyond the grasp of his pupils, and his natural reaction, in the interests of thoroughness, is to pause and say, e.g. “What does ‘warped’ mean?” and then to spend time explaining it. This procedure is wrong, except in the English intelligence lesson. The thread of the instruction is broken, and the children—apt enough as it is to flit easily from one thing to another—are being given a training in the negative direction.

Two correct methods are available.

(a) Incidental revision will give opportunity to tell the meaning without disturbing the course of the lesson ; e.g.

STUDENT : What happened to this man ?

PUPIL : He became sulky because he was refused a chance to . . .

STUDENT : Yes. His mind became warped or twisted.

Thus the correction has been made and the theme resumed without digression and without delay.

(b) Should the student feel that, even if the word be new to the pupils, the context will reveal its meaning, his best course is to proceed on this assumption. He will take care to have medial revision as soon as possible thereafter, to prevent misconceptions.

(The weaker pupils must never be forgotten.)

(5) Explanations must be adequate.

When adults are being addressed, many details can be left to the imagination, which has many years’

experience behind it. Children's years are few. They require the essential connections to be clearly portrayed. Incomplete explanation is as dangerous as wrong statement. It may put some or all of the children on a wrong track and cause misapprehensions, which may last half a lifetime.

Consider the following :

(a) The word " anecdote " occurred. It was explained briefly by the teacher as " a short tale," and passed over. Later, a child utilising the word in a sentence wrote, " A rabbit has four legs and one anecdote."

(b) A story was told of how a dog saved a man from drowning. A boy of six years of age declared after he came out of school that the story was a lie. He knew only small dogs, and had been given no idea of the size and strength of the rescuer. The consequent loss of faith in the teacher was with difficulty rectified, the little fellow roundly declaring, " The teacher should have told me."

(c) A class had been given a lesson on the Newfoundland fishing grounds. When revision occurred, among the answers given were, " The cod live there because they can hide in the fog." " The cod do not like the water when it is too deep, so the people made a continental shelf for them to live on."

Adequacy demands an appreciation of the pupil's limitations and of the necessity for making the approach to the child through more than one of the senses. The steps to secure it are these :

(a) As clear and complete explanation as possible—following sound preparation.

(b) Use of the blackboard or other apparatus for visual impression.

(c) Careful questioning to correct errors.

(d) Later, utilisation of the words, ideas, or materials by the pupils unaided, careful checking of results by the teacher, subsequent revisions and practice.

(6) Rushing is fatal to sound training.

So self-evident is the truth of this platitude, that it would seem to require mention only. Yet the young teacher, and in particular the enthusiast, is prone to go too fast. Therefore, he teaches but forgets to train. *He* advances, but he leaves behind him an ever-increasing assortment of bewildered stragglers.

Nor is the loss of the subject-matter to these pupils the worst result of that haste ; those who have fallen by the way may be permanently harmed. A feeling of inferiority is easily implanted in a child. Interest in school-work may be killed, and the pupil, in the endeavour to find another outlet for his natural activities, may glory in becoming the villain of the class. Rushing by the teacher may result, not in progress, but in delinquency.

The teacher must consider the pace of his class. He has no need to rush if he replaces anxiety by thoughtful planning.¹

The beginner cannot feel secure, until the ability to give sound explanation has become an integral part of his mental equipment. However successful he is in this, he must never remain satisfied with the powers he has acquired ; throughout his whole career there will always be new obstacles to surmount.

The teacher must himself progress, if he is to train others to advance.

QUESTIONING

Description, we agreed, embraces all the teacher's utterances. Of these, questioning is of paramount importance.

NOTE.—As on page 37, the beginner is advised, before reading the next section, to apply his own knowledge and

¹ Cf. p. 57 "NOTE."

initiative, in this instance by choosing a simple subject, e.g. The Coming of Spring, and writing out a list of all possible types of questions. These he should answer himself, to see that a pointed response has been solicited. Unanswerable questions are easily asked. It is better still to ask a friend to supply the answers. Finally, an attempt should be made to put the suitable types of interrogations into an easily remembered form.

This preliminary effort will give the novice a first-hand appreciation of some at least of the problems of sound questioning.

Questioning in school serves the two main purposes of (a) testing the child's knowledge, and (b) probing to help him to use that knowledge to reason out matters for himself. The difference between these two purposes is rather in the effects upon the children than in the means by which they may be achieved; both purposes are advanced by the questions asked by the teacher. Questioning, therefore, despite the variety of its details, may be considered as a unified whole.

The chief difficulty felt by the novice—the need for a sound formula for this testing and probing, so that he may make his use of questions an expert practice—is solved by language itself. Interrogative words are meant for interrogation.

While questions may be expressed in a great number of ways, the distinctive key-thoughts (omitting for the moment one auxiliary type which will be considered later) may be gathered up in the title, "We are seven":

Who? What? When? Where?

How? Why?

Result?

Bearing in mind that a question may be asked by a command, by a statement, or by an interrogation, the reader will profit from the variations given below, and will seek to discover others for himself. These variations are unconnected.

Who?

Who made this invention?

Whom did they discover?

Tell me to whom she went.

Whose behaviour caused this?

Which of the three was victorious?

Which part of the tree would be most suitable?

What is our headmaster's name?

Does anyone know what this river is called?

A sailor is sometimes called by another name.

Obviously, questions do not always require mention of the key, and may even borrow those of other types.

The outstanding character of the "Who?" enquiry is that the expected answer is a name.

What? is clearly in close connection with "Who?" Indeed, to some questions, the essential answers could be single terms, e.g.

What is the colour?

If we went far north, what special things should we require?

"What?" however, is not infrequently wider in its import, suggesting answers less simple. Such queries are these:

What is an amphibious animal?

Explain the meaning of destructive.

What kind of tools must we have?

What type of people would be able to do so?

How might we describe the legs of this animal?

This boat looks very interesting.

When?

When was it done?

At what hour did he arrive?

State the year it happened.

After which event did this occur ?

With what great discovery is his name connected ?

It took place at a particular time.

The others—*where ? how ? why ? result ?* offer like scope for efficient variation.¹

Key-thoughts will be further explained in the section on Utilisation of Answers, p. 72.

Since questioning is, however, only a particular form of explanation, all that has been said about speech and description applies here, but with an even greater force, for the framing of questions means for the beginner the persistent recurrence of momentary crises, during which lapses are most likely to happen, and gaps in continuity to occur.

Questions ought to be so worded that each child will be made to remember or to think without undue help, and yet will be given a clear conception of what is required.

E.g. Testing questions on the reign of Charles I.

(a) State the two sides in the Civil War.

(b) What name was first given to the soldiers of the parliament ?

(c) Why were they thus named ?

(d) Who became the chief general against the king ?

(e) How did this general become so important ?

Each question is so expressed as to give a clear idea of what is asked, but it rightly gives no aid to the memory beyond the stimulation of associated ideas. Each is effective because it is pointed ; the idea is easily understood ; the language admits of no dubiety.

¹ One of the best means of encouraging the pupils to acquire freedom of expression in the mother-tongue is the teacher's example. In framing questions he must have this in view as a general purpose connecting each of the particular purposes of the moment.

Language requires special mention. It must be well within the range of each child's comprehension. A clear distinction must, however, be made between what is necessary here and the suggestions given on pp. 57-8. There, we were dealing with explanation, which, like the language of their books, has as its reservoir the reading vocabulary of the children. Here, we are concerned with the narrower everyday vocabulary, for, in replying, the children will have only this stream to draw from. The experienced teacher, with a wide understanding of his pupils, may attract them to the larger expanse without danger. The novice cannot risk taking them out of their depths. He must make his language so clear that he keeps the thoughts of his hearers safely directed towards the response desired. Successful questioning has its source in simplicity.

E.g.

(a) "Who is our present monarch?" will be comprehended by a child of eleven.

"Who is our present king?" will suit one of nine.

"What is our king's name?" would be the most suitable form for a child of six.

(b) "By what motives was he actuated?" is not a safe question for pupils under fifteen.

"Why did he conduct himself in this fashion?" would be the simplification for age eleven.

"Why did he do this?" would be suitable for younger pupils.

This completes all that is meantime necessary on the theory of question-making. Sequence and what it involves is discussed in the section on "The Utilisation of Answers." But before he can claim a full mastery of the subject, the learner must turn understanding into a practised skill. If he has not already done so, he is strongly advised to begin that

practice now—before reading of the dangers involved. Here are some suggestions :

(a) Test the questions on pp. 64-5 for adequacy, pointedness, and simplicity of language.

(b) As a student in training actually with a class write out a list of the questions¹ asked by the teacher in a particular lesson daily. Although some may be missed, you will gather sufficient to note types, to see how approach varies, and to obtain a firm grasp of how a seasoned teacher elicits information.

(c) Choose any five subjects, write out twenty questions on each, and, at least twenty-four hours later, answer your own questions.

You will not know until you have tried yourself out in actual teaching what degree of freedom you have attained, but you ought now to have a fair appreciation of what constitutes a correct interrogation, and can, therefore, turn to the dangers without fear of being thrown off your course.

Beginners' Dangers

(1) Questioning and explanation must be clearly differentiated. A tendency to run these together makes difficulties for the novice or leaves him with false impressions of success.

(a) The rhetorical question has no place in the classroom. It is a lecturing device for the adult audience. The children do not understand it, and the sudden offer of answers when none were desired may disconcert the beginner and ruin the lesson. The cure for this habit is the already suggested refinement of preparation.

(b) The "tagged" question is a cognate mistake very frequently made by the "affection-first" instructor. He is describing, longs for the children's approbation, and to the end of a statement tags an

¹ See p. 32 *re* study of technique.

enquiry such as "Isn't it?" "Doesn't it?" or "Don't you think so?"

These young people are looking to the speaker for knowledge. The mere fact of his saying so will be sufficient for them. The ready response, "Yes, sir!" to the query "Wouldn't it?" is not a sign of their intelligence, but of their desire to please; and the less thoughtful will be the most eager to pay tribute.

The tagged question is not an asset. It is often evoked by a consciousness of inadequate explanation, and its spurious responses are no indication of creditable teaching. The remedies suggested on p. 9 will enable it to be deleted with firmness as a bad debt incurred by inexperience.

(c) A near relative of the tagged enquiry is born of impatience. The teacher says, "He did this because he——?" The child has only to supply the final term. At first sight there does not seem much difference between this elliptical interrogation and the correct question, "Why did he do this?" The definition on p. 64 said, however, ". . . to remember or to think *without undue help*"; that rule has been violated; the irreducible minimum only is left for the child.

An isolated question of this kind might do no harm; but this lack of patience on the part of the teacher becomes a habit, and explanation and enquiry are run together in a way which robs the latter of all distinct meaning. To illustrate: on p. 64 these two revision questions among others were asked—

"What name was first given to the soldiers of the parliament?"

"Why were they thus named?"

The impatient preceptor who has acquired the elliptical mode will perhaps say, "The parliamentary soldiers had their hair cut short. What were they

therefore called ? ”—or even more probably, “ and so they were called—— ? ” This revision, therefore, consists of a robbery of one answer and an enquiry scarcely worthy of the name. Such a process, continued, means that the teacher is deceiving himself as to his children’s knowledge, and is cheating the people he is supposed to help, for he keeps on stealing their opportunities. Elliptical questioning is theft in the guise of aid.

(2) It is sometimes forgotten that to give “ a clear conception of what is required ” (p. 64) is essential for correct questioning. Two illustrations will show the most frequent types of error :

(a) “ What about London ? ” Can you, an adult, answer this correctly in one brief sentence ? Yet beginners occasionally inflict such questions upon their immature charges.

Vague questions cause confusion. No pointed direction has been given ; indeed, innumerable answers might be supplied—all correct. The children are puzzled, the lesson is delayed, and the novice flounders in bewilderment, wondering how to seize upon the pointed statement which will help him out of the maze into the right path.

Those who have contracted this habit of colloquial phraseology may begin the cure by making certain of a finite verb in every enquiry ; common sense will complete the cure.

(b) “ What shall we find at the seaside ? ” while not vague, is so wide that the answers will again be extremely numerous—sea, sand, shells, fish, rocks, pierrots, boats, the ice-cream man, or even, since the class is plainly very young, “ the spade my little brother lost last year.”

The experienced teacher may with safety ask the

wide question when he wishes to evolve a lesson from the children's replies ; his skill in the utilisation of answers will enable him, with ease, to secure a logical development of his subject-matter. (Cf. "Canada," p. 45 (d).)

The general question must be avoided by the beginner. His wisest enquiry is one which is definite, e.g. "What do you dig with at the seaside?"

(3) *Repetition*¹ during instruction, a widespread practice among students in training, requires grave consideration. The correct procedure is to give every word its own weight ; all utterances ought to be to the point, and made once only. For three purposes only should the teacher repeat during a lesson.

(a) Revision—clearly announced as such—indicates that the same matter is being gone over afresh, to drive it home.

(b) There may have been an interruption. The teacher will therefore state, e.g. "That noise (etc.) hindered us. *I shall say that over again.*"

(c) A statement is so significant that it is desirable to have it repeated, e.g. "That is a very important point. *Listen to it again.*"

Unnecessary repetition is harmful in its effects ; it invariably leads to a definite lowering of efficiency.

(i.) Repetition encourages laziness among the pupils. They come to expect the teacher to make his statement a second time and fail to respond at once. Alertness is blunted, attention deteriorates, and commands are not obeyed with promptness.

The persistent repeating of pupils' answers by the teacher inevitably results in the failure of the pupil to speak out so that everyone will hear. Equally,

¹ Repetition here refers only to the teacher and should not be confused with the repetition-practice which the children perform. In this connection reference should be made to *Revision*, p. 47.

the others do not pay strict heed to the answerer, for they expect the teacher to give the answer again immediately. Receptive instead of responsive young people are the outcome, and the fine spirit of active co-operation is in danger of being destroyed.

(ii.) Repetition of answers inevitably means, too, the re-impression of wrong as well as of correct responses. The evil of stressing faulty ideas, especially among very young children, is too manifest to require elaboration.

The beginner frequently labours under the mistaken belief that unless he is using his voice continually he is not taking an active enough part in the instruction. The cure, even for a chronic offender, is to use the voice only to thank the pupil for his answer or to check when necessary for careless thought or speech.

Thanking pupils has also a positive value. Apart from being ordinary politeness, it encourages the pupils and helps forward the lesson. Many an unthanked pupil has held up a lesson, and been dubbed stupid. For example, after a child has given a reply correctly, should the teacher immediately and without comment ask him a further question, the child may rush to the conclusion that his first reply was wrong, and at once he essays a second solution to the first interrogation, to his own confusion and to the annoyance of the teacher. "Good !" would have kept matters right.

The same criticism applies to the practice of accepting the correct answer without comment and then asking others for the same reply. There is no need to bewilder the individual in order to encourage the group.

The correctness of replies should be recognised simply and with variations. "Yes," "Correct," "Right," "Thank you," "That's thoughtful," etc., can all be employed. Effusiveness must, on the other

hand, be carefully avoided. One should not put oneself in the position of the enquirer who accepted a correct arithmetical answer with "Very good!" and received in return the scornful rejoinder, "Very good? It's perfect." Hyperbole may defeat itself. Thanks must obey the rules of sound description.

(iii.) Confusion naturally follows when the habit of repeating is due to nervousness or impatience. The latter causes haste, with an undue strain upon the children, and partly digested information instead of clear knowledge. A rushed group, we have already seen, has as its corollary a string of bewildered stragglers.

The nervous novice, on the other hand, who continues to talk while he strives to marshal his next forward announcement, will probably repeat his statements in different phrases. The pupils have, therefore, to contend with two utterances in place of one; perplexity results—and children's "howlers" are sent to the newspapers—and progress is slowed down.

Questioning shows the evil effects of this reiteration even more clearly. In the following example, the subject was a military raid. The student asked, "What else would they take besides the people? Would they not take something else? What would they want to get?" This was given to pupils of $8\frac{1}{2}$ as one question. Obviously, the first sentence is sufficient alone.

Bad as that triple question is, however, it has the merit of repeating only the same thought. In the next instance, the ideas as well as the interrogations are threefold. "Where were they coming from? What difficulties had they found? Who could the people be in the other ship?" These also were intended for one question. The children, listening to the first, lose it to grasp the second, and end by confusing the two with

the third. The final result is that the slower pupils find themselves puzzling over a problem which possibly presents itself to their minds as, "Where were the people's difficulties in the other ship?" Poor children!

The remedy, already suggested on p. 54, can only become really effective when the anxious student overcomes his dread of being silent, and strives to replace impatience by the efficacy of the pause.

(iv.) The same bad effects accrue when this unnecessary repetition is done for the sake of emphasis or to satisfy inattentive pupils. An illustration from the English lesson will make clear a danger which may affect all subjects.

In a dictation practice or test the teacher's normal course is to read the selected passage through, to give an idea of its general import. Next he reads it phrase by phrase, the pupils writing each phrase after it has been read. Lastly, he re-reads the whole passage so that the punctuation may be correctly placed.

If, at the second reading, each phrase is read twice, or any extra help is given, the pupils' self-reliance is being sapped. Life does not often give second opportunities.

Deliberate repetition of this kind means lowering one's flag. The teacher has chosen the way of shortened views.

THE UTILISATION OF ANSWERS

Sequence in Questioning

Thus far, questions have been considered as single units. Now they must be examined in their inter-connection with explanation, and with each other.

Questions are asked in order to test the children's

knowledge, so that gaps may be filled and misconceptions corrected—additional reasons for the avoidance of long spells of explanation (cf. p. 43). Again, interrogations are made during a period of instruction to ensure that the lesson is being followed with intelligent interest, and to encourage the children to think for themselves. Answers, then, are the traffic-signals on the highway of learning.

First, questions must obviously be so framed as to produce the answer desired, which then becomes the standpoint from which a further enquiry is made; the second answer in turn forms the starting-place for further interrogation or is the link connecting with a fresh passage of explanation. The problem facing the beginner is therefore the use of answers to obtain sequence in questioning. The idea of sequence will perhaps be most readily grasped if we examine a few illustrative examples.

(In his reading of these, the beginner will, here also, strive to discover for himself the difficulties underlying this continuity and endeavour to find solutions. Only then should he turn to the subsequent hints.)

(a) Infants—one and a half years at school—co-educational. (Note the step-by-step advance.)

After a discussion on frosted hands, which some of the little ones had been suffering from, the enquiry began :

“ If you wish to keep Jack Frost from hurting your hands, what will you do ? ”

Answer : “ Put gloves on.”

“ What, if you hadn't gloves ? ”

A. : “ You could put your hands into your pockets.”

“ But girls haven't pockets. How would they manage ? ”

A. : “ Rub them.”

“ Good ! Why do we rub our hands ? ”

A. : “ To keep away Jack Frost.”

Here followed illustration of a thorough method of rubbing every part of the hands, the pupils co-operating.

“How do your hands feel now?”

A. : “Warm.”

Now were mentioned wet hands, not properly dried by the towel, and, therefore, the need for proper rubbing.

(b) Age 7-8.

(The variety in the form of the questions will repay careful observation.)

A lesson on the hedgehog—with a stuffed specimen.

“Does anyone know this little animal’s name?”

Answer : “A hedgehog.”

The word is then written on the blackboard.

“How does it come to have such a name?”

Answers not satisfactory.

“I wonder why the first part of its name is hedge?”

Answers vary. The teacher accepts :

“It maybe lives under a hedge.”

“Why will it live under the hedges?”

Answers : “To be safe” and

“It gets food there.”

The teacher *commends the thoughtfulness* of each answer, and utilises the second.

“What sort of food will it find there?”

The answers are rather fragmentary. The teacher sums up, and then asks :

“Where will these be found?”

Answers indicate : “Under hedges.”

“Which part of itself will the hedgehog use to find the things it eats?”

Answers obvious.

“Perhaps you know another animal which pokes with its nose into dirt?”

“A pig sometimes receives another name?”

After the answer, the teacher explains that the hedgehog

is not a hog or pig, but seems to use his nose like one. He now asks his summation-question—

“ Will someone now tell us what a hedgehog is ? ”

This over, the nose is re-examined by the pupils and investigation proceeds.

(c) Urban children, age $9\frac{1}{2}$ -10.

(Here, most of the answers are left to the imagination of the reader.)

The introduction consisted of a few questions about gardens, then a bulb was shown.

“ What is this ? ”

“ What might we do with it ? ”

“ Why should we plant it ? ”

“ Tell me the kind of flower which will grow.”

“ You aren't *quite* correct. Think of the *size* of a crocus, and look at the bulb again.”

“ The name of this bigger flower ? ”—hesitation by pupils—“ A spring one ? ”

Answer : “ Daffodil.”

“ Look at the bulb again. What are these white parts below ? ”

“ Where, then, has it been ? ”

“ At what time do you think it was planted ? ”

Answer : “ In autumn.” (The lesson was in January.)

“ Look at the roots again. How did they manage to grow ? ”

The teacher now cut open the bulb and showed the interior, including the shoot with the leaves small and closely packed. He discussed the first stages of growth, then enquired :

“ Since the plant is growing, what does it require ? ”

“ Where will it get this food now ? ”

“ Through which part ? ”

“ But the roots seem too thin to take in earth-food.”

“ Thank you. Who can describe how the water does this ? ”

“ ‘ It swallows the food,’ would do, but you remember the sugar-in-the-tea lesson last week.”

The answer, “ dissolves,” was written on the blackboard.

“ Which things, then, have we learned the plant needs? ”

“ A third one? ” A boy answered, “ Air.”

“ Now look at the roots. What is their colour? ”

“ Where do they live? ”

“ What do you notice about the colour of the shoot? ”

“ Where was the white part when the bulb was in the earth? ”

“ We need someone now to explain why the tip is green.”
The “ air ” boy did.

“ There’s something I’m wondering about. Might not something else be required? ” No answers were forthcoming.

“ Let us go back to the beginning of our lesson. When did you say the bulb was planted? ”

“ What has it had since then? ”

“ Why does it take so long to grow? ” No answers.

“ Can it be waiting for something? ” Hesitation by pupils.

“ I’m sure you know the answer. Try it another way. Suppose we wished the plant to grow more quickly? ”

“ What would it get in the house? ”

“ Where does it get this warmth from when it is in the garden? ”

“ Prove it ! ”

The blackboard with the four points was next referred to, and the summation or unity-question was asked :

“ What will be the result if a plant gets these four supplies? ”

Answer : “ It will grow.”

The blackboard work was then completed, to read thus :

(1) Food from the soil	} are required for growth	<u>dissolves¹ growth</u>
(2) Water		
(3) Air		
(4) Sun		

¹ These two words were to be left on the blackboard for a few days ; see p. 100.

The rules for the handling of question and answer can be readily deduced from the examples given.

(1) *Treat the interplay as a conversation, with the teacher as guide.*

(2) *Develop the thought logically, in accordance with the subject.*

This is just where difficulties occur for the novice. A social conversation tends to be turned aside, by association of ideas, into other channels, but a lesson must keep to the aim. Beginners, after teaching, rather frequently say, "I know I should have continued questioning at that point, but I was afraid of being side-tracked too far." There are three safeguards.

(a) Know thoroughly the values of the seven "keys." (They are discussed on p. 82.)

(b) Make use of the blackboard summary. (See p. 96.)

(c) In preparation, note and memorise thoroughly all crucial points in the lesson. With these resolutely aimed at and with the aid of common sense the lesson, in spite of awkward moments, will move to its proper conclusion.

E.g. "Hedgehog." The crucial thought was the division into "hedge" and "hog."

"Daffodil." Two crucial points—there are others—were "roots" and "Why does it take so long to grow?"

"Sun-helmet" (see "A Voyage to India," p. 79). The chief difficulty was to anticipate the likely answers to the "head-protection" enquiry, so that the teacher could be ready for eventualities.

Compare the Introduction Note to "Canada," p. 45.

(3) *Make every question and answer one short step forward.*

The children are young ; they vary much in ability. A step too big will leave them lagging, and will have the same effect as rushing.

There is one difficulty which torments the beginner. A question fails to produce an answer. The student is puzzled and wonders if he will require to give the information. A solution may be found in going back a little, and advancing again with shorter steps.

E.g. In a lesson on "Napoleon's Adventure in Egypt," after the main facts had been gone over, the question was asked, "What was the result for Napoleon?" No satisfactory reply being forthcoming, the teacher said, "Go back a little. *Did Nelson succeed or fail?*" Answer: "He succeeded." "What then has he done to Napoleon?" Answer: "He has shut him up in Egypt."

The auxiliary question in italics is technically a correct interrogation, but obviously it is focused rather narrowly, giving an opportunity of guessing with a fifty per cent. chance of being right. A sequence of such leading enquiries would become questioning under false pretences, of as little real value as the tagged question.

The beginner is advised to regard this "Yes or No" interrogation as a half-step question only, to be used as sparingly as possible, and to be followed invariably by its complement (as above), which must be a searching enquiry.

(4) *When an answer is given which is right only in part, utilise what is correct, ignoring the wrong portion*¹; or, stated otherwise—Recognise the idea behind the words of the answer, and utilise it to advance.

¹ In teaching children, it is negative training to stress what is wrong. One ought to stress what is correct and let the wrong go by default. Many a student in attempting to rectify an error repeats it, thereby re-impressing the mistake he is endeavouring to eradicate. It naturally follows that all such tasks as, "Correct the following errors" are doubtful expedients in the elementary school.

E.g. "A Voyage to India" (age 10-11). Port Said reached, heat of Red Sea discussed, and type of clothes agreed upon.

"What will each of us require to protect the head against sunstroke?"

A. : "An umbrella."

"That is a thoughtful answer. But it might be too windy or we might wish to work at something with both hands."

A. : "A panama hat."

"Nearly correct. A panama is too thin. Can you tell me something between the two?"

A. : "I don't know its name, but I know what it is."
"Describe it."

The child did, and another pupil supplied, "Sun-helmet."

(5) *Accept answers encouragingly, to make the children feel that their co-operation is appreciated.*

Insight, therefore, into the thought-processes of the children is imperative. The best teachers are those who have developed this power to the utmost because they have never ceased in their endeavours to know their children. Successful training is impossible without understanding. One must stand in the pupil's shoes, know his home-life and environment, look at life as he does, and be able to realise the mainsprings of his activities ; thus, through comprehension of the interests of his young charges, the teacher can, by apt comparison and ready comment, capture their imagination, hold their attention, and show himself a wise and understanding guide. For insight is rooted in knowledge.

E.g. A student, giving a lesson on the thermometer, enquired :

"What do we notice when the weather becomes warmer?" A boy of 9+ answered, "Steam." This was not accepted, yet the answer was not wrong.

The student's failure here was twofold. His question was a general one, susceptible of a variety of correct answers. He had not anticipated the possible difficulties and their solutions. Again, he did not see the pupil's point of view. Children under the age of adolescence cannot readily make a generalisation. The answer ought to have been accepted, and been followed with, "What causes the steam?" . . .

An illustration of the opposite kind.

A headmaster, going into a class-room during an interval, found four boys aged 9-10 years alone, and a pointer, broken, lying on a table. "Who broke the pointer?" he enquired. No replies were given. He asked the boys in turn. Each responded, "No, sir!" "Was it broken before playtime?" "No, sir!" "Has anyone besides yourselves been in the room?" Again the answer was in the negative. "Then one of you *must* have broken it?" A boy stepped forward, "No one broke it, sir! Tom Anderson had a hold of one end of it and I had a hold of the other—and it broke."

Can the reader suggest why this shrewd headmaster, who exercised a firm rule over his school, was satisfied with the reply and took no disciplinary action beyond an admonition not to play with pointers? ¹

The novice cannot have, meantime, this deep cognizance of children's motives and intentions, but he can and must have a wide familiarity with his subject-matter, a knowledge that extends far beyond his immediate lesson. If he has, while actually teaching, to puzzle over any aspect of his matter, he is not free to ask and follow up questions, nor will he improve his understanding of the children if he has not an unfettered alertness for all that is going on around him. Insight does not come to the distracted.

¹ The boy's thought, could he have expressed it, was somewhat as follows: "We were playing with the pointer, of course, but were not giving it any rough usage. It should not have broken; there must have been a flaw in the wood—and it broke."

Even after the student has done all he can, however, he will be faced with certain difficulties inherent in the teaching of young children.

Some children are fond of the easiest road. They answer carelessly through sheer mental laziness, or, it may be, to try out the new instructor. These pupils will most probably betray themselves by answers given in the briefest possible manner or without careful expression. A cure in either of such cases may be effected by asking the pupil a sequence of questions, with strict insistence upon accurate thought and correct expression ; and from time to time during the lesson the teacher will return to him with incidental probings, to ensure he is profiting by the instruction. The real test of successful teaching is the training of the individual without neglecting the group.

Requests for answers must be spread over all the pupils. The student will find, especially after he has learnt the names of the children, that expectation of being asked for a reply will largely prevent inattention and trifling. Children want to show their powers. A child who is seldom or never asked for an answer tends to become indifferent in all his school-work, or may even become openly disobedient in order to draw attention to himself.

Asking for replies in turn round the class is in general not to be recommended—for obvious reasons. The beginner is advised to give the eager pupils ample opportunities, but to watch alertly the four quarters of the room for the indolent.

A whole class, on the other hand, may be unresponsive. The learner must first remedy any faults in his own technique. If he is frank enough to welcome criticism, he will receive much valuable help from the class-teacher. Should the fault lie with the pupils,¹

¹ See p. 16.

however, the cause must be discovered and, if possible, removed. One piece of grit may throw a whole mechanism out of gear. When all has been done that can be done the novice must lead forth resolutely ; he will probe and encourage, and day by day his earnestness will make the response more general, and the answers will show steady improvement in thought, even although the pupils may be dull or stubborn. A real teacher does not follow the easy road.

A tendency to answer his own questions is a particular danger for the novice. He is so eager to do well that when answers are not readily forthcoming, he is afraid to delay, and descends to mere telling. "Listen and I'll tell you" becomes a slogan of weakness.¹ Explanation there must be, but as a purposive activity ; the beginner is failing when he makes it merely a haven of refuge, for in so doing he is robbing his pupils of the opportunity to think for themselves.

When, however, one is making enquiries on points of fact, and discovers that the children are ignorant of these, it is folly to go on questioning : e.g. Not all the asking in the world will elicit the correct answer to the question, "Which is the chief city of Japan ?" from individuals who have never known the name.

The novice need not steal through by the way of explanation. Three groups of keys, seven in all, will open the doors.

Who ? what ? when ? where ? are comparatively easy to use, for they deal with the concrete, and even from a rather unresponsive group will usually be productive of answers, since these will largely turn upon previous knowledge, and can in most instances be given in single terms or in short phrases. It is after these have been

¹ See also paragraph 2 on p. 110.

given that the beginner so frequently stops short in his enquiries.

A teacher who used only this first group would be working entirely on a mechanical basis. However clever a craftsman he might be, he would run a grave risk of producing crammed but dissatisfied pupils. Children want to think. They become bored and disobedient when they are made the butt of continual information-testing. The first four are the mundane keys.

The other groups open an appeal to children's sense of adventure. Through the doors thus unlocked, they can enter to ally themselves with the events of history ; they feel they are exploring when they investigate the geographical conditions of a region ; and are at the same game when they are striving to solve problems in arithmetic or to write English composition. *How?* *Why?* and *Result?* are the keys of imagination. The children may use them even if left to themselves, but they will in that case regard their teacher as a being apart, and co-operation will come only by compulsion. The "Come with me" instructor who has captured the joy of teaching carries these keys brightly burnished by constant use. For him, too, they open doors by which he enters into understanding of those placed in his charge. Without these three keys there can be no real insight.

One isolated instance will show—by its absence—the value of such a key.

A visitor to a class asked a boy, "Which would you rather have, $\frac{2}{8}$ of an orange or $\frac{1}{2}$?" Answer: " $\frac{2}{8}$." "Haven't you made a mistake?" "No, sir!" "Listen to the question again." Again the boy replied, " $\frac{2}{8}$." The enquirer was dissatisfied and condemned the boy for careless thought. Later, the visitor was in the playground when another boy sidled up and said, "Please, sir! Yon

boy doesn't like oranges ! " The visitor had forgotten " Why ? "

Result ? is in a class by itself. Unlike the other six, it is represented by no single interrogative word in our language,¹ and its importance is too often apt to be forgotten. The omission of the *Result ?* question means that a process of questioning, however clever, remains truncated and thus induces the children to be content with unfinished work. But where the teacher habitually uses this summation question to complete the sequence he wins the highest possible degree of co-operation ; the children are happy in feeling they are reaching final decisions for themselves.

Even when the subject-matter is new to the children, the questioning need not be confined to incidental, medial, and final revision. Facts must be given, but much can be done to stimulate interest with such questions as, " What would be done now ? " " Who would help ? " " When would this occur ? " " Where could they go ? " " How would such people behave ? " " Why do you think he did so ? " " What would be the result of it all ? " ² The doors can be opened if the keys are remembered.

(Care must be taken, however, to differentiate clearly between a " lesson " and a story. The latter must be told.)

The following may serve as corrective hints for the beginner whose questioning tends to be truncated.

(a) Memorise the seven keys in three distinct groups.³

(b) Practise steadily in private, beginning with each of the first four in turn, and developing a sequence as far as the subject will allow. Vary the subjects.

(c) Before memorising lesson-notes, look for places at which to insert the last three keys.

(d) In school ask for daily practice in revision and recapitulation with the pupils. The mundane questions will

¹ A sure indication that for centuries adults have been satisfied with incomplete thought.

² Cf. the Daffodil lesson.

³ See p. 62.

be more or less readily answered. Concentrate upon the others.

It is also helpful to carry out, occasionally, a complete sequence with one pupil, in addition to asking for answers from all parts of the room.

(e) Take time to think when puzzled by an answer. If necessary, say to the child, e.g. "What makes you think so?"

(f) Rigid abstention from repeating of answers is a good safeguard against theft of the summation answer.¹

(g) First and last, be animated and earnest, *but do not rush*. Children must have time to think.

A STUDENT-DIFFICULTY.—"Shall I have the pupils answering as briefly as possible or in complete sentences?" is not infrequently asked by students after they have had some teaching experience.

The solution depends upon the type of answer requested.

Who? and *What?* can in most cases be correctly and adequately replied to with one word.

When? *Where?* and sometimes *What?* are receiving an incomplete response when one word only is given. At least a phrase is required.

E.g. "Where was he imprisoned?" "The Tower" is unsatisfactory. "In the Tower of London" is an adequate answer.

How? and *Why?* demand *at least* a clause.

E.g. "Why did he fail?" Answer: "Because he was not quick enough?"

Result? should normally have as a reply a complete sentence.

In the reading and oral composition lessons, complete sentences will be the aim throughout.

Obviously then, one must strive to obtain accurate, intelligent, and adequate answering, which, while not always in complete periods, will aid the children to express themselves in correct English.

(An instructor who lacked freedom in the use of English

¹ Note the importance of the summation question on pp. 74-5-6.

might tend to accept single-word answers on all occasions. This teacher must correct himself first, otherwise his pupils might develop into citizens who, in spite of their power to think, yet find themselves inarticulate.)

CORRECTION OF EXERCISES

The return of exercises is cognate with the utilisation of answers, with this difference : that one does not have to solve the difficulties on the spur of the moment, but is able to take time for consideration of the best approach.

The student will be asked on occasion, both as part of his training and as an aid to the class-teacher, to correct the individual exercises of the pupils. The inexperienced learner can miss errors with surprising ease. He has possibly been detached from school-life for so long a period that the memories of his own minor difficulties in school have become nebulous, and he will have lost all appreciation of what are the usual mistakes of childhood. Extreme care is essential. Every word, figure and line must be noted if the child is to be correctly assessed and, where need be, thoughtfully guided to the right road. Children who have given of their best deserve the best from their teacher.

E.g. In English work, wrong spelling and misuse of words will probably be noted with readiness, but neatness of writing, punctuation, and correct spacing and arrangement are also of inherent value in the training of children. Nor must the larger issues be forgotten in the minute observation of details. Logical sequence of well-expressed thought is the ultimate aim.

All the above applies with equal force to arithmetical compositions. It is not enough to be satisfied that answers are correct ; the working must be examined to see that the child has thoroughly understood the process, step by step.

Where the answer is wrong, the sum must be scrutinised with special care, in order to appreciate the pupil's difficulty and so effect a cure.

Marginal and other comments by the examiner ought to be well written, with thoughtful remembrance of the child's probable reactions. Children will not strive to be neat and orderly if their mentor himself is guilty of slovenliness. The red or blue pencil should be used with boldness, but its marks should be strictly confined to the errors indicated. Children tend to nurse a grudge against the teacher who makes them feel that the work to which they have given meticulous care has received unnecessary mutilation.

Should time permit, the beginner is advised to go over the exercises a second time, to see that nothing has been neglected.

When he has been asked not only to correct but also to assess the value of each child's effort, the exercises will be put into order of merit before the second reading is begun. Whether a beginner be too severe or too lenient in his assessments this second reading will enable him to be reasonably sure that each child has been placed in his true relative position.

A scrap-jotter kept at hand during the correction will enable a note to be made of all types of error.¹ The student may not be asked to deal with these exercises on their return to the pupils, but it is well to prepare as if that also were already a part of his duty. Accordingly, after corrections are ended, the scrap-list will be examined, and an attempt made to discover the cause of each mistake. Some errors will be due to carelessness ; some will be peculiar to individuals. The others must be considered seriatim and the method of rectification pondered. Finally, the order will be decided in which they can best be explained anew to the pupils concerned.

¹ Include these in the record book.

Only one typical difficulty should be smoothed away at one time. Any attempt to reteach all faulty matter in one lesson would still further confuse the very pupils who most require help. The successful teacher hastens slowly. The severity of selection will make this adjustment-lesson much more valuable than the first teaching of the same matter, and the pupils will have a much better appreciation of the point at issue than previously, for they have had practice in trying it out for themselves.

The main fault discussed, the exercises should be returned to the pupils, each of whom will rewrite what he had expressed wrongly. The teacher will go round the class, seeing that careless and individual errors are rightly amended, but he will make it his special care to see that what has been retaught is properly grasped and practised. Only after this invaluable revision work has been faithfully carried out should new work be begun.

NOTE.—The quicker pupils will have finished their corrections while the slower still continue to labour. Foresight is a necessary part of the teacher's equipment. It is the more intellectual pupils who receive least training in steady concentration in school. Here, then, is one of the many interesting problems of school-life which the student must solve for himself.

CHAPTER VI

THE BLACKBOARD

IMPRESSIONS reach the brain through the senses. The teacher, therefore, will not be content to make his approach through one sense only, but will strive to utilise the five. A single line is easily broken. With some activities the appeal may have to be made to one sense at a time, each of the others being used in turn. Revision, recapitulation, and individual practice are accordingly indispensable, if speech, touch, and sight are to consolidate the knowledge given in the oral instruction. But the senses ought to be used, when possible, simultaneously. The oral lesson is strengthened when objects can be handled, when stories are made more vivid by actions, and when the aural impressions are accompanied by the visual.

The student in training will make a special study for himself of the use of apparatus in its various applications. Each subject and each stage require particular treatment. He will take every opportunity during school practice of observing—and using—what is most suitable. It will be an interesting investigation to design and make pieces himself, and he may even have the joy of evolving some apparatus which will be in some degree a distinct contribution to educational usage.

In a small book of this kind it is impossible to deal fully with a subject so highly specialised as the use of apparatus must be. The present discussion accordingly

confines itself to that useful adjunct found in all class-rooms and at all stages—the blackboard.

By its means much can be demonstrated which it would scarcely be possible to describe in words. (Even the dictionary requires to show supplementary diagrams.) It is an ever-present asset, and valuable also as a medium for training in logical sequence and in the power to distinguish clearly between accidentals and that which is vital and intrinsic. The blackboard is thus not only a dusky surface for the utilisation of chalk but an active agent in the development of character.

For both teacher and pupils it is of unique importance. It exercises an influence upon every one of the children day after day, for it is in continual use, and reveals the instructor actively at work. Indeed, it reflects with no uncertain light the personality of the teacher. According as he is confident, balanced, and skilled in his practice, so will his writing and illustrations be. He will always have the blackboard thoroughly cleaned before fresh work is begun; his use of the chalk will be firm and bold; all lines of writing or figures will be regular and even; and arrangement will be a means of showing that same orderliness of mind which he demands from his pupils. Slovenly blackboard work is an offence. The beginner must therefore acquire facility and skill early in his course if he is to inspire his pupils with a desire to follow him along the correct road. The blackboard will be either the student's betrayer or his friend.

A study of the personality of the teacher in action would require at least a volume for itself. In the present connection it is sufficient to note that the teacher's desk or table is in the same category of daily visual influence as the blackboard. A table continually littered untidily with papers is a direct incitement to careless work and disorderly con-

duct on the part of the pupils. In this appeal to the eye is included, too, the distribution and the collection of books, etc., the condition of the class-room cupboards, and, indeed, all the leader's behaviour. The teacher's conduct must be in keeping with his precepts.

Writing

Writing upon the blackboard looks easy. The inexperienced student sees the practised teacher covering its surface with bold, neat figures and words or drawing with effortless ease and apprehends no difficulty for himself. Can he not already write well? A feeling of dismay seizes him when he observes his own first attempt; the chalk, somehow, has not done what he meant it to do. He realises now that the seasoned teacher only gained his effortless facility by long and careful practice.

The technique of blackboard work differs from that of the pen. A sheet of paper is approximately horizontal, and with pen or pencil one moves the fingers and the wrist. In using chalk on a vertical plane, however, one's movement is from the shoulder. The arm is slightly bent at the elbow, the wrist and the fingers being kept rigid. No part of the hand or wrist should rest on the board.

The chalk, best held at an angle of roughly 45° to the surface, and pointing to 9 or 10 o'clock, is grasped equally by the points of the thumb, the index, and the middle finger. Whereas a pen rests against the index-finger, the reverse end of the chalk projects inwards towards the palm of the hand, pointing to the part about an inch below the base of the middle finger. A short piece, therefore, is best.

The beginner should stand directly in front of the part of the blackboard he is using, and at a sufficient distance to allow free movement of the arm. Writing

should be at eye-level. Afterwards, when facility and its concomitants have been gained, the student will learn to write from the side so that the pupils can observe as he works.

The novice ought to be able to write with fair skill on the blackboard within his first week of teaching practice. Indeed, he can make himself proficient at home before he begins his course. A large sheet of paper pinned upon a wall will do, and a stump of charcoal or of a thick pencil is a good substitute for chalk. Even "shadow-practice" will help greatly to give the necessary arm-habit on which good blackboard-writing depends. Awkwardness gives way in face of persistent practice. The beginner will not have the blackboard as a friend until he can go to it in any emergency, at any moment, freely. Nor can he count himself proficient unless he writes so boldly and clearly that every child in the room can read without strain.

Illustrations

Maps and sketches are the next need. Lectures with demonstrations on this blackboard art are naturally included in the student's training-college course. He will only receive full benefit from these, however, by testing himself beforehand, in order to come with a clear knowledge of his own shortcomings.

Those gifted with artistic ability will find that the chief difficulty is surmounted when facility in writing with chalk on the blackboard has been attained.

The so-called non-artistic person probably approaches the subject with the diffident thought, "This appears beyond me. I can make shift to draw with pencil on paper, but it is a slow and painful business. As for trying it with chalk on an upright board in front of the pupils. . . !" Examined, this reaction means he really can draw, but has not practised at any one sketch until he is able to draw it,

and others of its kind, from memory. Yet this non-artistic student has been drawing, continually, from babyhood, for writing is merely memorised illustration, with conventional forms. It follows then, that any person who has been able to commit to memory the outlines of 10 figures and of the 26 letters of the alphabet, can acquire an apt accuracy of delineation, none the less effective because it is mechanical. He may even discover in the process a latent talent.

Suggestions for practice, which the student can augment for himself :

(a) A lighthouse, with flying birds.—After trying it unaided, the learner will correct his work from a picture and will then practise steadily until the outline has become a permanent memory.

(b) A boat, a steamer, a sailing vessel, with similar treatment. Next, (a) and (b) can be combined.

(c) A church spire, the Cenotaph, buildings of varied styles.

(d) A duck, a butterfly, a Roman eagle, fish, etc.

(e) Maps, beginning with easy outlines and neglecting minor features : e.g. the coast line of India, the east coast of Australia, Northern Africa, all South America ; the courses of rivers ; mountain systems.

(f) Where a room or enclosed space is to be illustrated, a plan of the scene is more likely to be successful than a sketch. Dots will serve for people. The effect of such a map will be not dissimilar to that of an aerial photograph.

These blackboard drawings do not require elaborate detail.¹ Children of elementary school age can visualise a setting better than the average adult. If the sketches are to serve a really useful purpose, the teacher must be able to execute them as quickly as he would writing or arithmetical figures.

¹ In this connection the student is advised to study the type of illustrations used in the infant class-rooms and in the pupils' reading-books.

“Would it not be much better, however,” the beginner may ask, “to show pictures, or, failing these, to prepare drawings and maps beforehand? Would not such illustrations be more complete and better made?”

Prepared work, be it the printed picture or the teacher's own drawing, undoubtedly bulks largely in the life of the school, but the insistence upon the ready ability to reproduce upon the blackboard rests upon a sound psychological basis.

An illustration made during the lesson is a great incentive to interest. Children watch activity closely. They will almost always stand to observe a street artist at work, but may pass completed pictures, even if new to them, with merely cursory notice.

A completed drawing or map may contain details which tend to divert the children's attention from the aspects to which the teacher desires to attract them. The blackboard sketch, on the other hand, will have no extraneous details, time will be conserved, and the lesson will tend to be soundly unified.

E.g. When atlases were being used instead of the blackboard, a child, unable to answer a question, explained his inattention by stating, “I was looking for the place where we had our holidays last summer.”

Again, the prepared picture might wreck the purpose of the lesson, for, by supplying information which one desired to elicit, it would restrict opportunity for reasoning.

E.g. A class of boys was discussing a prospective camp. The order of events after arrival on the site was dealt with, the blackboard sketch or plan being developed as the lesson advanced. The boys were therefore compelled to think for themselves. A complete illustration would have been over-suggestive.

Further, the earnest teacher does not rest content with well-taught lessons. He gives his pupils opportunities of presenting their difficulties. In answering such enquiries, he will find a simple blackboard sketch is often the readiest means of solving the problem. The extempore drawing will both help the pupil to a clear understanding and greatly enhance the credit of the teacher through his ready ability.

E.g. Prefixes had previously been taught. A child who lived in a hillside "suburb" above the town, could not understand why "sub," which usually means down, was used in this case. The teacher at once made a sketch of ancient Rome on its first flat-topped hill, explained that the wall-encircled part had become crowded, and asked where extra houses would then be built. The answer, "Down the hillside, outside the wall," given by the pupil, was almost immediately supplemented by "Oh yes! I see it now." The sketch had been the short-cut to comprehension.¹

This blackboard ability not only creates deeper and more lasting impressions because the pupils see the sketch taking shape before their eyes, but it is definitely suggestive, as all sound teaching should be, and tempts the children, as no prepared sketch can do, to emulate their instructor's efforts.

On the other hand, there is a definite place in school-work for the prepared sketch.

It is sometimes sound tactics to prepare the outline of a drawing where great accuracy is desired, the details to be added as the lesson progresses. Even when such exactness is not demanded, the novice will find this quite a helpful plan, provided he regards it as a temporary expedient only, pending the acquirement of apt

¹ Such a sketch might well be the basis for a short lesson on the distinction between urban, suburban, and rural.

skill on the blackboard. Obviously too, it is a saving of time, when an adjourned lesson is to be resumed, to reprepare the sketch beforehand, so that a beginning may be made, after due revision, exactly at the point where the interruption occurred. So, too, it is wise to have the background of the scene prepared, when the purpose is to fill in the picture by *appliqué* work, a mode of procedure particularly useful in the infant-room.

When, however, the picture is to serve a deductive purpose, e.g. in an oral composition by little ones on "Spring," the blackboard sketch ought not to be made during the lesson. Efficiency and economy of time go hand in hand in school.

The printed picture or the teacher's completed illustration on paper, finds its real place as a supplement to the blackboard sketch. After the necessary deductions have been made from this, the former may be introduced, for revision and recapitulation, or to act as the summation of the lesson, and should finally be pinned up on the wall and left there so that the children can examine and discuss it and be able to ask the teacher for further information. An interesting picture merely shown and removed tantalises and frustrates.

The inexperienced student, in deciding between a prepared drawing and a blackboard sketch executed during the lesson, will take common sense as his guide, but he must beware of habituating himself into the belief that the prepared article is the better choice for any particular lesson. The lurking feeling, that after all he might have drawn the sketch while with the class, really means he has taken the road of least resistance.

Summaries

Blackboard summaries of lessons, already suggested on p. 42, not only strengthen the instruction by their

visual appeal, but are of particular benefit to the student himself.

The beginner, especially the graduate who has listened to lectures for a few years, may incline to talk overmuch, perhaps to enshroud the main issues in a mass of detail, or to imagine that when he has merely mentioned a matter it has gone home to the minds of his hearers. The blackboard summary is a splendid corrective for loose teaching. The novice must learn to prepare this *résumé* with exactness—it is a sound help towards memorisation—and will write it on the blackboard as the lesson proceeds, point by point.

The cure for the student afflicted by loquacity may be thus stated :

Name the subject of the lesson.—Link up with previous knowledge, briefly.—Pass to the first main point.—*Write it on the board.*—Ask the probable results.—Lead briefly to the second point.—*Write it also.*—Complete the lesson on these lines.

For final revision, the learner will find a ready method in cleaning the board, and reconstructing the summary by means of question and answer. Later revision-work may well be begun by asking the pupils to reproduce these headings in their jotters.

Such summaries are one of the best means available to the teacher for training his pupils in neatness and orderly arrangement. The pupils learn also to grasp the significance of logical sequence, and through their teacher's stressing of the main points they are enabled to appreciate the relative values of the facts brought to their notice.

Two examples will serve to illustrate :

(a) The teacher's idea was first to revise the names of the rulers from 1603, and then to concentrate upon the

short reign of James II. The blackboard therefore read :

James I
 Charles I
 (Cromwell)
 Charles II
 James II
 ↓
 Declaration of Indulgence
 Trial of the Seven Bishops
 James II → *Above the Law*
 People roused
 Flight of James II
English Revolution of 1688

The statement "Above the Law" might have been placed first, as the subject of the main part of the lesson. It is placed in the third line as being the children's concept of the reasons for James II's behaviour.

[Students, when beginning their course, frequently produce a summary somewhat as follows :

English Revolution, 1688

James I	Declaration of Indulgence
Charles I	Trial of the Seven Bishops
Charles II	Flight of James II
James II	

This is unsound. The sequence is incomplete ; "Cromwell" or "The Commonwealth" is omitted. The second column is misplaced, since it has no perpendicular line to divide it from the first. There is therefore serious opportunity for immature minds to become confused. Children can make extraordinary blunders with matter new to them.]

(b) This was done in two sections—the first was revision.

S.P. — B.P. = Gain

B.P. — S.P. = Loss

S.P. = B.P. Neither Gain nor Loss.

The board was then cleaned and re-used thus :

A fruiterer bought $2\frac{1}{2}$ gross of oranges for £1, and paid 1s. 6d. for carriage. He sold them at 1d. each. How much did he gain or lose ?

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Total B.P.} &= \text{price of } 2\frac{1}{2} \text{ gross} + \text{carriage} \\ &= \text{£1} \quad + \text{1s. 6d.} \\ &= \text{£1-1-6}\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Total S.P.} &= 2\frac{1}{2} \text{ gross at 1d. each} \\ &= 30 \text{ dozen at 1s. per dozen} \\ &= \text{£1-10-0}\end{aligned}$$

$$\text{S.P.} = \text{£1-10-0}$$

$$\text{B.P.} = \text{£1-1-6}$$

$$\therefore \text{Gain} = \underline{\underline{8-6}}$$

In this particular instance, the answer was proffered immediately the total S.P. was found. In view, however, of more difficult examples to follow, the logical method was completed on the blackboard.

One aspect of the summary is of peculiar benefit to the student. Feeling a growing facility in the utilisation of answers, and a corresponding improvement in the co-operation of his pupils, he becomes eager for greater freedom and desires to deal fully with every thoughtful answer, but he fears he will thus be irretrievably side-tracked. With a well-planned summary developing on the blackboard as the lesson progresses, the beginner can launch out with confidence. When he feels himself being drawn too far aside from his main theme, he can say, "It would be very interesting to learn more about that, but it will need to be left over for another day." He then writes the salient word of the postponed matter on the top right corner of the board, and continues, "Now come back to the last point we were at. What was it?" The children have the summary before them, the response

is readily given, and the lesson proceeds along its logical course. The beginner finds that his summary gives him freedom.

Semi-permanent Recording

A lesson may extend over a few days. A spare blackboard is therefore invaluable for the retention of summaries and sketches. Examples of writing, of arithmetical problems, etc., may thus be left visible until the difficulties have been solved.¹

Data postponed, as in the above case, will also be conveniently left, both as a reminder to the teacher and as an inducement to the scholars to search out the connotations for themselves, which is naturally the best way to learn.

The far-seeing teacher will also use the spare board for facts which have not been taught in class, but which he desires to indicate in advance, in order to smooth the track for forthcoming lessons. Silent suggestion can be a powerful force. This system can be begun even in the infant-room, and is of particular value in older classes where technical terms are concerned.

An advance-appeal of an analogous kind can also be made by the use of maps and illustrations. Poems and even books may be similarly treated. A whole chapter would not suffice for an exposition of the art of suggestion. The thoughtful student will work out the possibilities for himself.

¹ Where blackboard space is restricted, large sheets of stiff white paper are helpful substitutes.

CHAPTER VII

MAKING PROGRESS

SEVEN stages mark the student's course. Whether he halts on the way, or proceeds steadily onward to the highest, depends upon the ability and the resolution which he brings to his aid.

At first he is awkward and self-conscious. He makes only a fair attempt at control, for he is not yet acting as a leader. Despite his earnestness, the development of his themes is not suited to his young hearers, explanations are not sound, and he is bewildered by the answers received. He has a stern struggle not to shrink into himself with a sense of inferiority as he observes the ease with which the class-teacher carries out his activities.

The first step forward shows the novice becoming at home in the class-room. He appreciates what is required and is making a fairly good attempt to grip and interest the pupils. His self-consciousness is passing. As yet, however, he is so apt to blunder and to follow a wrong track that he cannot be safely left in sole charge for any prolonged period.

Where the hindrance is one of personality, he has not yet learned to marshal and unify his powers. He may acquire the technique of instruction, and even become able to do splendid work—if a second person is present to keep control—but so long as he cannot win the respect of his pupils he can never regard himself as fit to assume responsibility.

The student must now be definitely aware of what

are his own shortcomings and must apply all his skill to their rectification if he is to make a further advance.

The stage of good if uninspired work is next reached. Control is firm. The line of development is maintained, but chief points are given instead of being elicited, and questions are largely of a testing nature. Lessons are soundly taught, but are held rather rigidly in the student's own grasp. He has not yet gained freedom.

The enthusiastic student soon becomes dissatisfied with a mechanical correctness. Personality takes the lead. He still holds the main essentials of the lessons in his own hands, but at first tentatively and then with greater boldness he probes for reasons and results, and knows the improvement in his work by the increased interest and co-operation displayed by the children.

Insight and initiative make the preceding stage one of transition. The student finds himself winning to freedom in handling his subject-matter. He uses more interesting and better illustrated approach, and is able to appreciate the ideas behind the answers and to utilise them with skill. He is now making a very good approximation to the standard of the experienced teacher.

A high stage of attainment will be reached when the student, without losing any of the powers he has acquired, can step out into the open without fear. He can now, as it were, hand over the lesson to the pupils, and is able to weave it into a unified whole with the children's willing co-operation. Ingenuity has come to the aid of knowledge and insight.

Some few reach the highest stage. These are the people gifted with a high degree of natural teaching power, to which has been added a wide background of knowledge. Yet the natural teacher has a danger all his own. Because certain aspects of his future work present but little difficulty for him,

he may be tempted to lean overmuch upon native ability. One cannot lean and make progress. Scholarship and skill must be continually refreshed, and new vistas must ever invite if one is to do the excellent, soul-satisfying work which the needs of the young people demand. The endowed must bear the responsibility of his talents.

IN THE CLASS-ROOM

You are now in school, bringing with you quite a good theoretical knowledge of methods, and are anxious to test yourself in practice. The first few days have been filled with careful observation and with occasional assistance ; you have begun to realise the children individually.

Opportunity at last offers ; the teacher is called out of the room. You take charge at once, and revise the lesson in progress. The five minutes' practice seems all too short, but the teacher, attracted by your resource, soon asks you to conduct a dictation test, giving the hint to prepare the passage, to obviate any difficulty with the phrasing.

When school closes, he makes a few suggestions, which, supplemented by frank self-examination, may appear somewhat as follows :

Personality.—Mental attitude not right—sentimental (came down to pupil's level, instead of pulling them up to mine)—too placid (afraid to agitate them)—Diffident, awkward (must conquer myself).

Manner.—Not assertive—nervous, showing lack of patience—Eye was alert (commended by teacher).

Voice.—Monotony of tone—(final syllables not always clear)—greater mobility of lips required (thought I'd mastered this)—too conversational (stand farther back from class).

Control.—Result of foregoing—must be firmer—“Have everyone silent and attentive before you begin.”

The next steps forward are taken within a few days, e.g. (a) Returning a spelling test, using the blackboard, (b) Telling a story, (c) Revising the story by questioning on the succeeding day.

These over, the teacher takes notice of some improvement in manner and enunciation, and makes further comments, which you again supplement.

Blackboard.—Not clean to begin with (too shy to ask if matter on it might be rubbed off)—writing clear, not neat (my letters clumsy; must practise more)—arrangement not good (too busy with spelling; forgot “a good example”).

Description.—Teacher’s criticism a shock! (I had thought of “only a story”)—poor selection (many superfluous details)—“Power of the individual word”—Diction too stiff—not told dramatically. (New realisation: nothing unimportant in teaching.)

Yet, the other day, when you related a personal experience, how alert the children were. You yourself were interested. To-day, the story “fell flat” because your imagination was not fully awake. The mountain must not only come to Mahomet; it must migrate into his mind.

The novice inclines to forget initial atmosphere. “Once upon a time,” “Not long ago,” or “Just last year,” effectively uttered, should be sufficient to create this. Description begins with the first word.

Questions.—Awkward—confined to *who? what? where?* (keys of imagination!!!)—leading questions frequent.

Use of Answers.—No skill as yet (must observe more closely)—answers accepted encouragingly—requests for answers not spread over class.

Soon comes the first big occasion, a whole lesson.

A serious caution is necessary before you turn back to the method of preparation in Chapter IV. At your present stage you have gained some first-hand acquaintance with fundamentals, and, being very conscious of the points of technique, you are apt to prepare with these in the front of your thoughts. It cannot be too strongly stressed that technique is never a principal ; it is always an auxiliary. Common sense must make the pathway of the lesson. Only when that has been formed should technique be brought forward, to fill gaps and remove obstructions.

The subject-matter will naturally be on the following lines :

Lesson.—

I. Aim.

II. Pupils' previous knowledge in the subject.

III. Matter—

Connection with II.

Sound line of development, suited to pupils.

Main points stressed, orally and on black-board (and in writing by pupils now or later).

Unified.

Revision—incidental, medial, final.

Suggestion, setting the stage for the next lesson.

IV. Next lesson in the subject indicated.

The quantity is always a difficulty for the beginner. The solution, until experience has taught him the correct assessment, is to prepare with an alternative stopping place three-quarters through the lesson. On the other hand, he will never have too little, if he comes with the next lesson in the subject also ready.

The point of contact between previous knowledge and new matter is of supreme importance. Whatever else is forgotten, that crucial connection must be made. The main point of the instruction will likewise be kept steadily in view, so that, however much one stumbles among details, the lesson will move to its designed conclusion, and the beginner will be able to say, "I really taught."

Preparation will be complete. The lesson must be carried through without reference to notes.

The trial over, you will probably be able to say : "My first complete lesson ! I didn't stick, but twice I was glad of my blackboard summary. The teacher said I am moving in the right direction, but must not be afraid to 'let myself go' in the presence of an observer."

The lesson-notes, amended in the light of the experience gained, should now be entered in the record book.

Other lessons follow, in each of which you strive to improve upon its predecessors. Then comes a further adventure.

The visit of the supervisor need not be a severe ordeal. Undoubtedly he has to say whether you are likely to become an efficient teacher, but it is his privilege to aid you towards that goal. Frankness about difficulties, therefore, will let him know the more exactly what help you need. As you go from teacher to teacher and from school to school, he will be the connecting link in the sequence, so that your training may be unified and progressive.

There is much that can be given you by precept and by example, yet he will expect more than mere obedience to precise orders. A rigid system would be the negation of progress. His aim is to leave you as much as possible to your own initiative, and to guide

you a little this way, a little that, so as to assist you to become a teacher who works on sound principles, yet sees possibilities and looks ahead.

The seven stages at the beginning of this chapter show that the supervisor, like all teachers, works to a balanced system. The headings—personality, manner, etc.—detailed on page 103, indicate the points to which his observation is directed.

Visits may be unannounced. A lesson requires therefore to be offered on the spur of the moment. Each student, it was previously noted,¹ has to be prepared, after the first few awkward days, to take over the work of the teacher at any moment, and for the whole day if necessary.

Initially, however, the supervisor's visit will be intimated in advance, the student being given ample time for full and complete preparation.

For the first such lesson, you will probably be allowed your own preference. On later occasions the subject will be prescribed. The actual matter for all instruction must, however, connect with what the pupils are doing in class. The children are the first consideration.

Proceed naturally and with confidence when the time comes. The supervisor expects you to make mistakes. He himself, despite years of experience, is not yet satisfied with his own teaching powers, and never will be. There are no perfect teachers.

During your lesson four main considerations occupy him. He holds a watching brief for the children; they must not be harmed by wrong information or treatment. The strong and the weak points of your teaching will be noted. He will be pondering your weaknesses to find the core and supply the remedy. Lastly, he is ready, if need be,

¹ See p. 28.

to take over your lesson, to demonstrate how your teaching might be improved.

In discussion with you afterwards, the supervisor will survey the lesson, make suggestions, and answer your enquiries. His advice is personal to you—another student may require just the converse—and will be entered in your record book, so that you may have before you an exact indication of the factors which require your special attention.

The training course proceeds. The teacher has been giving you increased opportunities of practice. On subsequent visits the supervisor has commented upon the earnestness of your efforts and you feel you are making steady progress. Suddenly a change takes place. A blank feeling of dismay seizes you as you realise your lessons no longer seem to develop in accordance with your wishes. Difficulties appear to crowd upon you the more desperately you strive. You have ceased to advance.

At this point it is necessary to stand back and look at matters in their true perspective.

Novitiate has three well-marked periods, viz., natural progress based on native ability, consolidation, and well co-related advance. The first need not concern us here; the second is the difficult period. When initial effort has carried him as far as it can, and he recognises there is much more in the art of teaching than the uninitiated perceive, the learner changes imitation into conscious experiment. His "beginner's luck" is now over; the second period has begun. This stage comes to all students sooner or later. There is no escape, unless they are to remain mere imitators, victims of their environment.

This second period can be a very trying time. At first, in his efforts at co-relation, the student probably avoids one extreme only to go to its opposite. His

lessons decline in value. He becomes over-anxious and the decline is accentuated. A perfectly natural stage has become a period of bewilderment and retrogression.

The first corrective is to recognise this period as a valuable "gathering time." The retrogression need not occur if the student holds fast to what he has already made his own, and is content to advance one step at a time. His main problems will centre round development of the subject-matter, explanation, questioning, and utilisation of answers. Each factor should be dealt with in turn, patiently, point by point, and in particular, explanation. The class-teacher and the supervisor do all in their power to help, but the learner ought first, in every difficulty, to fall back upon his own natural judgment, remembering that the basis of technique is common sense.

The duration of this period varies with the individual, but at last, and very often when he least expects it, he finds himself again advancing, now armed with new powers, and the road is open before him.

One day, the headmaster will ask you to take sole charge of a class, such practice being a definite part of your training. Act as if you come with confidence and knowledge. Be animated ; you have no other adult to overawe you. Keep the children busy. You will probably do better than you expect. You will also discover much about your own capabilities.

You may find yourself weak where you thought you were strong, and strong where you dreaded weakness.

Responsibility will compel you to use all your talents and so may enable you to "find your feet" as you could not while under the care of the class-teacher. Diffidence and constraint will have to give place to firm dominance, and when next you are tested by your

supervisor you will be delighted to discover that your informed confidence tends to remain as a permanent acquisition.¹

As the course proceeds, there are so many problems to be solved, and these vary so greatly in their individual incidence, that they can only profitably be dealt with when the student is actually undergoing his training in the schools. To this, however, the following exceptions require to be made, since they present aspects which are of general import.

The learner in his progress passes through the various phases of under-teaching. At length, by assiduous thoughtful practice, he becomes able to present well-developed helpful lessons, and can assure their being soundly stressed by his thorough revision. Still he feels restricted. He recognises he has facility in questioning only when he is testing, and he finds his lessons lack freedom. He desires to make his pupils think for themselves, not only to aid them to absorb and remember.

The chief difficulty in asking thought-compelling questions during the development of the lesson lies in making the first effort. The student who cannot make an opening for such interrogations may begin the cure by inviting the pupils to put up their hands whenever he reaches a point with which they are acquainted. The children will not fail to respond. Two or three expository lessons treated thus, together with a well-informed use of the seven interrogative keys, should serve to open the way to the desired freedom.

Even with matter of which the young people know little or nothing, much may be done by a skilfully mingled use of description and of the keys of imagination to induce them to take part with enthusiasm. The "Daffodil" lesson, which illustrates how the "un-

¹ The subject of responsibility-teaching is continued in Part II.

known " may be elicited, will repay further study at this point.¹

Sometimes the learner acquires the power of asking searching questions but still finds the development of his lessons jerky and awkward. The learner himself may be erecting obstacles. Many a student not only repeats answers, but delights in elaborating the points at issue. The sequence of interrogation is thus broken, co-operation receives an unexpected check, and the lesson is continually jolted to a standstill by the student's vocal urge. The cure has already been given on p. 70.

The next obstruction is the partly correct answer. Here, the difficulty is caused by the student framing his supplementary questions as a whorl instead of as a staircase. He says, e.g., "No, you're not quite right," but gives no guidance, and then asks from other pupils, "What is *your* answer?" or "What do *you* think?" in the hope that this circular method will take them to the desired response. The correct mode is to say, e.g., "That part is right!" (quoting it and neglecting the wrong portion). "Can you improve it?" In default of the same child's reply, another pupil may give the nearer approximation. This and following answers will be taken in similar fashion step by step until the required point is reached. The whorl depends upon chance; the staircase beckons.

Even when the partially correct answer has been mastered, care must be taken that the pupils are encouraged to carry each sequence to its finish. The student frequently leads his pupils up to How? or Why? and on receiving the answer, says, in his impatience, e.g. "Yes and the result is so and so." Mutilation of the sequence is theft. It is not too much to say that such conduct, persisted in, helps to evolve citizens who are incomplete, for while children they

¹ See also p. 84.

are being robbed of the opportunity to reach conclusions for themselves.

After his conquest of the answer, the learner's psychological reaction not infrequently causes him to forget the balance necessary for all sound teaching. He becomes obsessed by the need for successful utilisation and goes to extremes. The consequences of such overteaching are various.

The attempt to extract the impossible has been noted (see p. 82, "Japan").

Another tendency is to carry utilisation too far in one lesson, and so to exhaust the pupils as to rob the periods of instruction which are to follow. The limitations of the children have been forgotten. This danger is an ever-present hazard in the secondary school, but it can also occur in the elementary school, particularly where the teacher becomes unduly interested in one subject.

Keeping rigidly to the time-limits noted in Chapter IV will be the student's best defence against this risk. The supervisor will give additional aid through individual lessons. A special safeguard is provided for the qualified teacher.

The class time-table is not merely a chart detailing the teacher's work day by day. It is a scientific instrument to give due weight and consideration to the different activities. Especially is it designed to obviate as far as possible the danger we have been considering. High and low tension must alternate. Each lesson is not a thing apart, but an integral portion of a well-planned whole.

A third tendency affects the student who feels he must at all costs avoid the danger of becoming a mechanical teacher. The direct giving of information now appears to him as a retrograde step. In his eagerness, he desires to come right out into the open

and to depend entirely upon enquiry and answer. All credit to him for the attempt, but in every lesson there are facts which must be given by the instructor. The expert teacher, with years of successful work behind him, may couch much of that essential "giving" in question-form to win the co-operation of his pupils, but careful observation will reveal that the direct imparting of knowledge, even by him, occurs with surprising frequency. Sound instruction must ever preserve the balance between questioning and description.

The following lesson will illustrate :

Class, age 10-11. The teacher's aim was a composition lesson so taught as to correct a habit of making lengthy introductions, and to supply a ready method of going straight to essentials.

[Children tend, even well into adolescence, to lose themselves among details and to give unbalanced work ; e.g. in "A Visit to the Tower of London," the paragraphs are often found on these lines : (1) Delight at idea, (2) Preparations, (3) That morning, (4) The Journey, (5) The Tower (unfinished). One paragraph (and that incomplete) out of five has been devoted to the prescribed subject.]

The teacher decided on "A Visit," the place to be, apparently, at the choice of the children. He came, however, with his thoughts prepared for each of three subjects, viz., the seaside, a place of historic interest, and the Zoo. The first and the last were both mentioned in answers ; the teacher then asked : "Seaside or Zoo?" and the show of hands enabled him to say : "Right ! We'll choose the Zoo."

The introductory paragraph he had decided to base upon four interrogative words. He now wrote on the blackboard:

OUR VISIT TO THE ZOO

we went

He asked the following questions :—When ? Where ? How ? Why ? Suitable answers were obtained—not

H

always at once—and were written as received. The blackboard read :—

we went
Last Saturday we went
Last Saturday we went to the Zoo

The others were added in their turn until the sentence was completed thus :

Last Saturday we went to the Zoo at C—— by bus to see the animals and birds, because they are extremely interesting.

The question was now asked, “Will this do, or could someone improve it?” One child suggested “by bus” immediately after “went”; this was accepted.

The pupils were to write the remainder of the story themselves, dealing with one kind of animal in each paragraph. The teacher now drew their attention to the four interrogative words he had used, and enquired :

“What will you do with these words?” and received as answer,

“We are to use them for our own paragraphs.”

He then wrote the words on the blackboard, first adding “What?”

The reader will have noticed that although the hearty co-operation of the pupils was obtained, the quantity of “giving” by the teacher was rather large, and indeed larger than at first appears. Yet the *via media* between question and explanation was taken, and the teacher was a real guide.

DAY BY DAY ABILITY

Without ability to teach, the student cannot hope to become qualified to take charge of children in school. Yet the teacher is much more than an instructor. Far from being an end in itself, teaching is only the means towards the larger purpose of training the young lives for the duties of well-informed balanced citizenship. Accordingly, the learner must attempt to answer in

detail the question, "What exactly does this call for from me?" A fresh perusal of this book with that thought in mind will also reveal to him much that has an important bearing upon the training aspects of the teacher's work among children. Additional light may be gained by considering a few of the ways in which those in authority test for the presence of this day by day ability.

The beginner reveals himself and his attitude to his profession when the choice of a lesson is offered. One person will select what will make the best appearance, another will copy what was given in a demonstration, a third may, for the sake of his future, try out a type of lesson new to himself.

Again, a learner may shrink from a particular subject, which is, for some personal reason, distasteful. When he becomes a teacher he will in all likelihood teach that subject by such merely factual methods as to cause the children also to regard it with disfavour. For them a vocational avenue may thus be permanently closed or an opportunity for the wise occupation of leisure lost. The student's own feeling emanated, perhaps, from a similar source.

Preferences are natural. The teacher, however, has to make himself interested in every subject of his curriculum, if he is to give just treatment to his children. The training period is the time for correction. The abhorred subject will require a double effort before liking is acquired and technique mastered, and that effort ought not to be proceeding when one is responsible for the same children day by day.

Notes of lessons are also splendid reflectors of the student's future behaviour. A careful narrative, in which major points are not clearly differentiated from details, shows the conscientious but routine worker

who has not yet learned to see clearly and to select wisely. At the other extreme is the student who prepares only the main points of his lessons and trusts to native ability to carry him through. His training of the pupils will be as casual as his teaching ; he will be too easily content.

Further, many neglect to state " Previous knowledge " and " Lesson to follow," and thereby give the impression that they are thinking of the lesson only as a test for themselves and not as a link in the training of the young people. Short-sighted views do not augur well for the days to come. The record book is even more illuminating in its evidence.

During the actual teaching, the steady daily fight for confidence and proficiency shows strength. On the other hand, lack of the moral courage necessary for wise leadership is clearly indicated in the student who cannot teach without reference to notes.

The high value of the blackboard for inducing orderliness of mind in the pupils has already been mentioned.

In dealing with answers, many a learner jumps too readily from one child to another. Supplementary answers are not solicited from the same pupil. A child who knows the correct reply frequently requires pressure to make him responsible for his own decisions. The balanced student does not neglect the individual. Equally, too, he does not destroy the equilibrium of his lessons by over-attention to the needs of one at the expense of the many. Each child deserves a fair chance. Thoughtfulness for the children's welfare is also clearly shown in the careful explanation of difficulties, so that gaps are filled and each forward step is made from a firm foundation.

It is perhaps in his own comments that the prospective teacher most plainly reveals himself. They are

often made on the spur of the moment, and may express a view that is wrong because it is one-sided. Partial statements cause deadly harm. The instinct of the pupils for hero-worship causes them to regard each informative utterance of their teacher as a law of the Medes and Persians. In addition, the comment is apt to be made as a summation-statement ; it is therefore to some extent isolated, and just because of that isolation will tend to remain in the memory of the hearers when longer, more carefully considered explanations are forgotten. The student who would train with success keeps a strict guard on his tongue. Logical expression must be his aim and the capacity to set forth impartial views must ever be regarded as a prime essential.

A valuable source of information is the school report. Often an unobtrusive action by the learner will open a gateway into his mind for the careful observer. The kind of enquiries the student makes will also reveal him. The class-teacher will be able through daily intercourse to gauge his earnestness and to know the kind of influence he brings into the room.

This brings us back to consider work in school as a whole.

The teacher is not a free agent. He must obey the standard exacted of him by the community and must therefore set his own standard upon a still higher plane. The student is a teacher in the eyes of the laity. He too carries the responsibility of the profession. "How can we expect the children to do right if a teacher behaves in that way?" is the criticism on the very rare occasions when a teacher falls below the recognised code. People do not censure the insignificant. Since the introduction of compulsory education, the term "school" has widened and deepened in its meaning. The impress of the teacher's

work and of his personal influence upon the young is regarded as of supreme importance.

Thus we have returned to the thoughts with which this book began. Skill in teaching can be of real value only when conjoined with reliability of character and accompanied by interest in the children.

PART II
THE YOUNG TEACHER

THE TEACHER'S KEYS

WHO? WHAT? WHEN? WHERE?

HOW? WHY?

RESULT?

CHAPTER VIII

LEAVING COLLEGE

THE first steps in acquiring the craftsmanship of teaching have now been completed. Just as the teacher, however, must not be interested only in the particular stage in the school which is probably his natural field, but requires to know its relationship with the life of the school as a whole, so, too, the student will be aided to a still better appreciation of the implications of his training by a consideration of some of the problems which affect the qualified teacher.

The training course draws to a close, and thoughts are on the future. A post has to be obtained.

You must first marshal your forces. Generalship is as important as paper qualifications. Time must be spent considering and writing out a list of your assets, viz., academic and professional records, abilities outwith the usual subjects—gardening, games, music, drama, etc.—personal interests and spare-time activities. Everything which has any possible bearing upon your success should be included in this preliminary stock-taking. Next, consider the relative value of each item and so prepare your statement as to create the most favourable impression by means of orderliness of arrangement and a wise proportion, and to show that you can differentiate clearly between what is basic and what is ancillary.

The scanning of advertisements, which is the next step, demands care equal to that bestowed upon

examination questions. An offer of services should be made only when one has the qualifications which are stated as essential. "Desirable" qualifications give greater latitude. In default of a candidate with the requested optional subjects, a rearrangement within the school will sometimes enable an applicant with analogous "extras" to be appointed. In replying to this part, therefore, "I have no experience in ——" is of much less value than, "Although I have at the moment no experience in ——, I am fully qualified in ——," etc. The answering of an advertisement is the same kind of task as the preparation of notes of lessons. The advertisement will determine the aim, your statement already prepared will be adjusted in accordance with its indications, and concise neatness will have much to do with any success you may achieve.

When an interview is offered, *you* will be the interrogated. Anticipation proves helpful in this connection. You cannot possibly forecast all the questions you may be asked by members of appointment committees, but you can go with your descriptions as carefully prepared as for your lessons while a student, the subject-matter naturally being your own qualifications, your experience in the schools, and what you have done in work of a voluntary nature.

Diffidence will not help. You feel, perhaps, that you did not do as well during your training course as you had hoped. Yet, have you not been granted a qualification? You came to college wondering; you go from it knowing the lines upon which to work and to develop. The feeling that you have still much to learn is the best possible indication of your future success among the children. Nor are posts always given to the outstanding. It is sometimes said, "For pupils of this kind I feel strongly that we do not require one of the brilliant people, but one of the

plodding type who will understand the necessity for taking infinite pains."

Modesty is an estimable quality, but the interviewers cannot know your value unless you state your case with frankness. You are not pleading for patronage but are offering able and honest services.

Even if it happens that you have to wait a little before obtaining a post, the intervening time can be utilised with profit. Stagnation spells ruin. An extra course will add to your qualifications and increase your range. Alternatively, the working up of courses of lessons will prove of permanent value. In particular, this is a suitable opportunity to rectify any weakness in technique or to master any school subject which has not as yet become entirely congenial. Books need not be an insurmountable barrier; other teachers will be sympathetic to earnestness, libraries now reach even remote districts, and up-to-date information of certain kinds can be had from such places as travel agencies and consulates. You must read or rust.

Opportunities sometimes occur for further teaching-practice. An offer of voluntary service in a neighbouring school will probably be welcomed whenever a teacher is absent. Your action will not deprive anyone of remunerative employment, since interim help is normally supplied only when a teacher's absence extends over a week.

Official temporary work may also come your way. By continuing your studies you are ready to take hold from the first moment, and the headmaster's report may gain you the desired interview, where you will be able to speak with convincing decision, knowing yourself better qualified than you were at the completion of your official course.

Waiting is not pleasant, but life offers its prizes to those who hold on with brain alert and eyes open.

CHAPTER IX

THE FIRST DAY IN SCHOOL

COME prepared ! Some days prior to assumption of duty you will have taken care to obtain from the headmaster details of the pupils' foundations, and of the syllabus and books with which you are to build. Should this information for some reason not be available—it must not be due to oversight on your part—come with a whole day's work ready, one part of which may well be a written test.

The first day after a vacation, when rearrangements sometimes fall to be made, is apt to be specially disturbing for the new teacher. Keep the children busy in spite of interruptions. Effective leadership must be established from the start, for on this first, crucial day you will be watched in every particular by every pair of eyes.

A bearing of calm earnestness (indicating that you do not expect anyone to misbehave) is almost certain to be effective as a beginning. Speak as if you know what you are about, naturally but authoritatively, and you have already begun to consolidate your position. Proceed steadily with your work, and before the first hour is over the pupils will know that your word means law and order. The details of procedure which follow are given only as suggestions.

When first alone with the class, after the opening religious exercises, you will say, with your eyes and ears alert : “ Good-morning, children ! ” All the

pupils ought to rise promptly and politely and reply, "Good-morning, sir !" (or Ma'am !). If there is even the slightest slackness, say firmly : "Now, we shall have that over again, and *everyone* will remember to be polite. Good morning, all !" This will normally be sufficient, but should anyone fail either to rise promptly or to give the complimentary title a sharp correction should be given forthwith, yet with an air of unruffled equanimity as if you had all the authority in the world at your command. Then repeat : "Now ! We shall have that again. Good morning, all !"

The next step is to rearrange the pupils, without any reason at all, except to impress upon them that you have a reason and know your business. "Please bundle up all your books and belongings," leaves no loop-hole for the recalcitrant child who, if told to change his seat, strives to express disapproval by making a prolonged business of the transference. When everyone is ready you will carry out the rearrangement according to your fancy.

It is wise, however, to look out for the big fellow, who will perhaps be up to mischief, and separate him from the little one beside him, the instigator of it. You have just come, and have therefore to face the ordeal of the astute attempt. Although you are unaware of their history, they too may be concerned with their reputation in the class, and in that case they may perhaps feel that this new ruler may not be quite so sound as he appears, and that the risk is worth a trial. "We always sit together," they protest. You look at them appraisingly. "Haven't you forgotten something ?" you ask. Their psychological reaction is, probably, that this new acquisition is really a terrible fellow, but that if they yield on this point he may grant their wish ; and so the protest is now worded, "Please, sir ! We always sit together."

With a slight smile—such a smile works splendidly, for children are never quite sure what lies behind it—you now reply, very suavely, with your eyes full upon them : “ A slight mistake, my boy (or girl). You always *sat* together. *Now*, you sit separately.” From now on, your stirring, shrewd youngsters know where they stand, or rather, sit. Of course, they will have other attempts at testing you, but these will be more in the nature of forlorn hopes, or made to justify their own existence in the eyes of their playmates.

Now note correctly the seats into which you have transferred the protesters. Mistaken changes of seats have been known to occur on the children’s return to the room after an interval or on the following morning.

Even on this first day you will begin to learn the names of your children, in order to obtain a more personal contact. It is necessary to treat all in the same fashion. A habit of addressing some by surname and others by the given name savours of injustice and favouritism.

In co-educational schools, surnames are normally used for boys, which they prefer as manlier, and both names for girls, but all of one sex ought to be addressed alike. In the infant classes, no distinction should be made between the sexes, the first name, or both, being used for each child.

The first lesson will now be begun.

When an answer is given, the pupil knows to stand. If he is permitted to answer while sitting, he has found a gap in your armour.

Particularly on this first day, must you also see that standing is not a synonym for a slouching position. Should the seats be on the small side for the pupils, however, and they are answering with a desire to please you, rather than be too exacting, show you realise the awkwardness of the situation, without waiving the rule.

Accept only clear and thoughtful answering. Even although at first you hold up your lessons to some extent, each day will produce progressive improvement, and your insistence will be repaid a thousandfold.

All honest effort should be commended. It is a first essential to let the children feel you are interested in each one of them alike. In this way, you will do much to prevent the slow from seeking the notoriety of stubborn stupidity where fame is barred.

Rudeness in answering—or in any way—unless checked with promptness, will run through the class like an epidemic. Yet, the appearance of bad manners may be deceptive. No two children are alike. To-day, unacquainted with the pupils individually, you must make your diagnosis from the tone and manner in which the answer is given and, as always, be prepared to give the child the benefit of the doubt. The following example will illustrate how you may act with safety, yet with decisive effect.

In a lesson to pupils whose average age was 10½ the question was asked, "How might we travel from Newcastle to Hamburg?" Answers given were, "By boat," and, "By train to Dover, across to Calais, and then the train again." The teacher now asked, "Is there any other method?" the reply desired being, "By aeroplane." A child answered, "By swimming." This was honest misunderstanding, impudence, or the response of a would-be humorist.

The teacher, knowing the child to be dull, patiently and kindly explained the distance, and therefore the impossibility of swimming all the way. To the rude he would have said, with calm severity, "That is rude, sit down!" or perhaps, "Showing off? We haven't time in this class for that sort of behaviour." The humorist would have received the firm but suave reply, "Very well! You can keep on swimming for several days while we are enjoying ourselves."

Suppose you blunder—quite a likely contingency on this opening morning! There is no need for excitement. You will not be the first to do so in such circumstances.

The correct procedure is to thank the child who pointed out the error, and, with very young children, to add clearly, "I must be more careful next time." If the pupils are nine years of age or older, you could say, with a good-humoured smile, "It's quite delightful to catch your new teacher making a mistake"; then pause and continue, "Now, if your teacher can make a mistake, then you will not think yourselves stupid when you blunder, but will try to do better next time."

Your solitary inaccuracy thus treated, far from doing you harm, will give your young folk an understanding of your honesty and of your calm behaviour in a difficulty.

Inattention on the part of individual pupils will almost certainly occur during this or a later lesson. Guidance has already been given by the graded steps shown on p. 18.

Be careful to notice, and to rouse, the dreamer who sits looking at you open-eyed, with his thoughts far away.

General inattention is not usually the fault of the children. Various causes are suggested on p. 16, but the teacher's first thought should always be, "Am I to blame?" Too anxious to-day, you may not have soundly welded the known and the new; your method may be uninteresting; your language may occasionally be beyond the young people's comprehension; or the lesson may simply be too long. A convenient remedy for the last, which is very likely to occur immediately after a vacation, is to keep each lesson shorter than the period allotted to it, the few

remaining minutes being devoted to an "odd moment task" of a different kind.

At the end of the period, if the children are to remain with you for the next lesson, explain somewhat as follows: "After I have finished speaking you may talk to each other for a little, but must be ready again when I ask you." The relaxation is in line with the pupils' needs. They will appreciate its being freely given, and they will be less inclined to trifle during the succeeding lesson.

Grant permission to leave the room when a child asks; refusal may be detrimental to health. On this first day it is not easy to check those who are making this merely a game at your expense, but you can at least be sure that no two pupils are allowed out together.

When playtime comes you must be very definitely systematic. Any licence allowed now, although you have done well thus far, will reveal you to be vulnerable. If a bell usually rings, let the children know the warning is for you, not for them. Have them arrange everything as you desire it to be. The pupils now sit up ready. They pass out.

On resuming after this and every interval, be in your place before they come in, unless you are on duty elsewhere. If there are any late-comers, hear what they have to say, admonish appropriately, and note down their names under their observation.

The hours pass in steady work, and now the last lesson finishes. Without any suggestion of haste, which would mean a lowering of your standard, you see that everything is as you desire it, and the children sit, ready. A cheerful, "Good-afternoon, all!" will now obtain a like response, and the children pass out.

So the day ends. You have placed respect first, and have already established yourself as the appreciated leader of a well-disciplined "mob" of very interesting

young people. Your credit is at "Fair" and the barometer is rising.

Three very necessary hints are added, the last of which requires special attention.

Do not bear any animosity to your "bad" pupils. Animal spirits are not a crime. Had you not once a childhood of your own?

Keep to the beaten track in your work until you have indubitably consolidated your position. Only then can you try new ideas, and never without caution. "New" does not necessarily mean "better."

Prepare for another day's effort, but first have a good laugh over the incidents of the school-day you have just ended. If you don't, you will not be truly fit for to-morrow. The world lies at the feet of the enthusiast who can laugh.

CHAPTER X

LOOKING AHEAD

THE children should know beyond all possibility of doubt, after the first few days, that their new teacher is a kindly, understanding, but firm ruler who expects each to give of his best, and work should have been steady. The week ends. Now you have time to sum up your experience and to plan your campaign in detail for the coming weeks and months.

Perhaps, after considering the time-table and the syllabus, you may find yourself saying, "What if I cannot cover all this ground thoroughly in the given time, or cannot keep pace with the experienced teacher next door whose class is at the same stage?" Anxiety is unnecessary. The syllabus contains only so much as can be reasonably accomplished. Steady thoughtful application will see you through.

Sometimes it will seem that you have but little to enter in your official time-book. You can only go, however, at the pace of your pupils, for the effective training of children is a slow process. "Recapitulation" and "Revision" are necessary, and frequent, entries.

An additional time-book of your own, of a size convenient for carrying, will prove an asset. Left-hand pages will be available for special notes. Each right-hand page should be divided into four columns, thus :—

Projected		Done		Revised		Dates
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By keeping each line of activity on a separate page, you will always have at hand a clear and orderly summary ; the arranging of the data in the first column will make for economy of time, and " Revised " will be a continual reminder of the need for sound consolidation. Work should be projected in detail, however, only some three or four weeks ahead. As experience deepens, you will find you require to alter your proposed sequence from time to time.

The official record-book is the property of the school. This other will be your own, and will form a valuable synopsis for succeeding sessions.

Every teacher has moments such as you experienced during the past week, when you felt very uncertain of the best procedure. The knowledge gained in your training course should ensure that the main lines of your lessons are correct. It is in the less obvious directions that pitfalls are likely to occur. A few suggestions may give you the starting points for personal investigation.

It is essential, however, to remember that no plan outlined in any book ought to be adopted until you have considered it in all its implications. Further, when suggestions have been accepted as helpful, they must be introduced one at a time, no second improvement being begun until the first has become a matter of habit. The enthusiast must hasten slowly if he would keep to his path.

In descriptive work, you had, as a student, to err on the side of simplicity. As a teacher, knowing the pupils much more intimately, you require to adapt your language closely to their needs. Words, phrases and constructions which occur in lessons must be progressively introduced into the teacher's speech. His use of language is therefore so allied to the children's expanding knowledge that he provides a sound standard for their direct imitation.

Narrowness of view is an imminent danger. The teacher who thinks only in terms of subjects tends so to segregate each from the others that the content is treated in a fashion which may almost divorce it from life. The inevitable result for many of the children is a feeling of boredom, since gaps are being left in their progress, and they fail to appreciate the value of the subject to themselves. No subject is an end in itself. The child's life in school ought to be a unity, towards the creation of which the various activities serve only as the means. The teacher must, therefore, think in terms of children and so interlock the media of instruction as to make each of these a natural aid to the others.

The seeming triviality of its details may tend to obscure the importance of this interconnection. But the teacher in the elementary school has to do with the beginnings of things ; and it is well to remember that, while the big river flows free and unchecked between its banks, one stone may guide or divert the whole course of the rill.

A child will have a growing sense of power if he is taught to spell and use words and phrases occurring, not only in the class reading book, but also in all types of lessons and in the subjects which interest him out of school. He will feel that the increase in his effective vocabulary is a definite gain for himself.

"English" must not be allowed to become a literary fetish. It is the general medium, and, therefore, "composition" ought to include every subject in the curriculum. Geography, history, and Scripture provide many themes which will interest. An opportunity to describe his experiences will be a delight to the child whose bent is towards the study of Nature, and the pupil who has artistic leanings

will do his English work with double zest if allowed, even if in his own time, to supplement his sentences by illustrations. Even essays on arithmetical topics can offer attractions to those whose interest is in figures. One of the most successful pieces of composition for its age-level the writer has seen was a letter by a boy to a cousin, telling him how to do a sum which was puzzling him. A class has as many types as it has individuals.

So, too, calculations should connect with all subjects with similar benefits ; and you will have to worry less over the fact that your pupils can do the mechanical operations with accuracy but fail with problems, if you are always careful to give English, which is our vehicle of thought, its proper place in the arithmetic lesson.

Lessons, then, are to be examined for crucial places and for opportunities for expansion. Preparation, therefore, must always be well in advance. For example, the reading lesson is frequently interrupted by a word or phrase presenting serious difficulty. In order to allow the theme to have the attention it requires on a first reading, you ought to put such words or phrases—they will be few—upon the spare blackboard three days prior to the lesson, and without comment. Next day, draw the children's attention to them and suggest they discover the meaning for themselves. On the third day, by discussion and explanation, the path for the reading lesson will be made smooth.

Similar forethought will also be given to other subjects when necessary, notably in connection with the terminology of arithmetic and of grammar.

(During the day, there frequently occur short interludes of a few minutes only, which can be turned to useful service in this connection. The study of

psychology will have shown you how such incidental matter tends to cling to the memory.)

This selective preparation must be balanced, however, by the pupils' limitations. It will defeat itself if used as an attempt to cover the ground with haste. Children are only learning to concentrate. Their attention is an alternating current working on a unit-length of not more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ seconds. Their interest can be intense ; it can also fade out with surprising quickness. "I know. I've seen it before," is often heard from their lips. Many of the children of the present generation suffer from jaded mental appetites. Civilisation tends to make them superficial absorbers instead of thinkers, and rushed lessons would merely accentuate the evil.

Things should be presented to them one at a time, to tempt them to observe with care. For example, "India" will extend over several periods. After the first lesson, one picture put up on the wall will be well examined. By the addition of one illustration on each successive day, the interest will be sustained, as it would not be were all put up at one time ; and the phases of life in India will be well impressed through the children's own observation.

One must also teach fully, as well as with earnestness. It is a frequent error of the young teacher to use abbreviations on the blackboard and to fail to make the children thoroughly conversant with the terms indicated. Ludicrous results and often painful humiliation for a child are the outcome of the teacher's carelessness.

Again, you may have a tendency, when giving informative matter, to explain and pass on. Even if you ask revision questions, the children not selected are perhaps receptive only. Concerted repetition, by supplementing the teacher's voice and the evidence of

the blackboard, will complete that triple combination of the senses which makes for firm impressions and will ensure that every child is gaining direct benefit.

The minutiae of methods, however, will not be the only objects of your investigations. You will endeavour to combine activities of similar kinds so that the unification makes for increased efficiency and progress. The following system has proved its value.

Dovetailing.

Practice in spelling can become a merely routine lesson, perhaps inducing ennui ; increase of vocabulary can present great difficulty of selection, as can the arrangement of recapitulation and of revision ; and oral and written composition can be the greatest trial to the young teacher. These four lines of activity can to a considerable extent be interwoven.

A notebook is necessary, preferably one with stiff covers. Each page should be divided into columns. Into it will be put, *not only words, but phrases*, from five different sources : (a) words which the children habitually misspell ; (b) words and phrases which the pupils have met in class but which they have not yet made entirely their own property ; (c) words and phrases incorrectly used in the pupils' own composition and speech ; (d) words and phrases from the same sources as (c), used by the better pupils, which it is advisable to introduce to all ; (e) words and phrases introduced by the teacher. All these will be put into the columns of the notebook in the order in which they come to the teacher's notice. It is helpful for reference to put, opposite each entry, the number of its source.

The method of use is simple.

(1) Beginning with the first column, or a portion of it, test the children in writing in their jotters.

Correct orally,¹ and have each misused word or phrase written out by the individual three times. Now have each used correctly in a sentence, preferably in writing. Give the list for preparation for a later date.

(2) Test this preparation on slips of paper ;
(a) spelling, (b) use in sentences. Collect the slips.

(3) After correcting these, re-enter in your notebook, immediately after your last entry, each word or phrase still misspelt or misused by any pupil.

(4) Return the corrected slips. (See "Return of Exercises.")

(5) You will add the coping-stone to the system by the conscious use, in your own descriptions, of the language they have been learning to use.

As you steadily add to your lists, continually re-entering words and phrases causing difficulty, and as steadily go through them, you will be doing what you set out to do, viz., to unify the four lines of activity, save much time and anxiety, and soundly impress by persistent reiteration and practice. This mode of procedure proves helpful in correcting local errors of speech and is of great value for English composition, since phrases as well as words are being thus treated.

A little thought will show the usefulness of the same method when applied in arithmetic for filling gaps in mechanised memories. Here, the young teacher is inclined to concentrate upon multiplication and division and to forget that the children's conception of number may be faulty and that the addition and subtraction memories are frequently uncertain.

In the endeavour, however, to know, and to use the best methods, it must ever be remembered—and the

¹ This should be done by the teacher, to prevent the re-impression of errors. Cf. footnote, p. 78.

statement will bear repetition—that the good of the children is the first need. You must show consideration for them in ways they will clearly understand. They will then feel you have their interests at heart, and they will work with a will. Cold mornings, for example, will give an opportunity to show them how to keep clear of chapped hands. Continually, you can let them feel by an appropriate word that they have satisfied you by their efforts ; and you will reward honest work by special concessions. Where home-lessons are the rule, an occasional free evening will improve the next effort ; the story read by the teacher during the last period of the week will have been well earned.

These concessions can be granted without lowering your standard. The exacting teacher is by no means the one least appreciated. Children desire to learn when they see the purpose behind the activity, and as they grow they come to realise the permanent value in orderly procedure, faithful work, and an encouraging atmosphere.

CHAPTER XI

REACHING THE INDIVIDUAL

CHARACTER-TRAINING is largely a silent process. The secret lies in personal contact and in the creation of an environment which will aid each child to make correct decisions. You are a new teacher, with a contribution of your own to make to education, and must apply your own ingenuity to the problems involved in the approach to the individual.

Each day you will be studying and gaining new knowledge of the individual characteristics of the children now placed in your charge, but at first your main efforts will be directed towards the creation of the atmosphere best suited for the progress of all. That environment depends upon the personality of the teacher. For several weeks, therefore, you must depend upon yourself alone, and only when you can clearly observe that the children regard steady work and ready obedience as necessary habits under your jurisdiction should you attempt to aid your personal influence by special measures.

The following methods are some of those which have proved of value in reaching the individual without loss of contact with the group, and are offered as suggestions which you may adapt and improve.

Time-table Co-operation

The pupils, even if acquainted with the data of the time-table, may know only the hours at which each

subject is due to be taken ; they are often in the dark as to what that subject will include. The teacher gains closer contact by taking the children into his confidence. A sheet of foolscap, on which you have written out in detail all the work to be done by them during the next two weeks, can be pinned upon the wall at their eye-level. Home-lessons, if given, and such suggestive extras as the difficult words and phrases for advance preparation (see p. 134) may also be intimated in their appropriate places.

Immediately before an interval, attention can be drawn to the innovation. The children will crowd round it, and after they return to their places a brief discussion will serve to convey that you felt they would like to know what is going on.

Should the suggestion be made that they can learn ahead if they wish, any impression of insidious compulsion must be most carefully avoided, lest the new idea be regarded as a trick, not as a sign of friendship.

The sheet, although detailed for a fortnight, is best renewed each week, so that the young people will have at least a week's information always before them.

Forecasting the extent of ground to be covered will give initial difficulty. Until reasonable accuracy has been acquired, be careful to underestimate, in order at the end of the week or fortnight to be able to say, "We have done more than I thought we should. You deserve a special story for doing so well." They will not know the story is a part of the scheme of work, and it will give double enjoyment, because they will feel it has been fairly earned.

This wall-sheet plan gives very definite results from age nine upwards. The children usually work better and more happily, for they can see the roads they are to go. Home-work becomes much less burdensome in its incidence ; the conscientious pupil is not oppressed,

as he is apt to be under the "individual contract" system, and the lazy child is no longer in a position to say, "I did not know." Above all, you are suggesting the need for foresight and are training your young charges in the responsibility of the individual.

Individual Options

The brighter pupils are often the most neglected. They learn so easily that the teacher is tempted to concentrate upon the average and the dull, and the racehorse is for ever awaiting the arrival of the slow. The clever may, therefore, pass through school without sustained effort. They head their classes; they win prizes and praise; but when school-days are over they not infrequently fade out into an existence of dull routine, face disillusionment, and join the ranks of the socially disgruntled. They fail in life because they have not acquired in childhood the habit of assiduous application.

The partial remedy used in large schools of "creaming" the pupils into A, B, and C classes is not alone sufficient. There must be a solution within the class itself. Your own observation and resource will supply many opportunities of giving your swifter children the same benefits as their "less-fortunate" brethren, but you will find your ingenuity aided greatly by working along systematic lines.

Naturally, you will have your pupils graded according to ability from the back to the front of the room, the poorest nearest you. Minor alterations made for particular reasons need not concern us at the moment.

For this first session, give the same lessons to all. Development into sections, each working at its own pace along the lines of a rural school, must be deferred until your experience justifies the belief that you can do

so without harm to any of the children. At individual work, also, begin by giving each the same type of activity.

By going round helping those who are most in need, you will be improving your personal contact with the weak. The strong will be reached by establishing the rule that as soon as a child has finished he stands up to attract your attention. *After making sure the child has revised carefully*, you will then ask: "What were you proposing to do?" You will accept the proposal or suggest what you think is more suitable for the particular child.

Sometimes he will go to the wall-sheet and select what he has not yet studied. Perhaps he will choose an activity not immediately connected with his school-work, e.g., a letter to a chum, the making of something, or reckoning up how to save a certain sum before Christmas. The preferences he shows from day to day will reveal the road he is likely to travel, and will give you increased opportunities to help.

Two composition exercise-books should be allowed for each pupil. The official one for essays and dictation will normally be in your keeping when not in use. The second is for the extra activities, and considerable freedom should be allowed, provided nothing suffers in the so doing. Let each child follow his bent. Show yourself interested by examining and improving what is done. This will occasionally mean your remaining with them for a few minutes at the close of the day, for you will feel compelled to devote most of your time during individual practice and study to the children who are slower, but the extra work thus involved is but little in comparison with the gain to the individual.

This scheme, like the former, gives definite, beneficial results. Boredom does not now distress the more alert pupils and the teacher no longer hears

the plaintive enquiry, "Please, sir! Can I have something to do?" The lazy and the slow begin to strive for similar "freedom" to work still harder. The persistent training in interested concentration induces a knowledge of one of the great sources of happiness, and may indeed play its part as a corrective for delinquency.

Your pupils who are poor at most things may be oppressed by a sense of inferiority. Encourage when you can. Where they show signs of brightness in any subject, transfer them to the middle or to the top division when their good subject is being dealt with, even if they are merely listening to your information—and occasionally forget to bring them back when the lesson is over. Similarly, when a top-division child is at a subject in which he is poor, transfer him to the front section, particularly if he is showing any symptoms suggestive of "swelled-head."

"Adoption"

Your next possible experiment has, of course, no legal responsibilities attached, but you will be wise to defer its introduction until the other schemes have been functioning for some considerable time as integral parts of the accepted routine. Hasty innovation is as harmful as neglect.

Your brighter pupils are now to some extent provided for, but you probably feel you cannot cope as you would wish with all the requirements of those who most need guidance. A combination of forces will solve your problem.

Divide your class into from two to five "teams," "houses," or "crews," according to its size. Dual seats will make this easy, but older accommodation can be adapted to suit. The teams should be made as equal as possible in aggregate ability, and as you have now been observing the children for several months,

both at work and at play, you will be able to put chums into the same team, although they may not be sitting together, the grading being as before from back to front.

Your practice has been to test all the pupils weekly or at regular intervals, and to enter the individual marks in your records. Now, marks will also be kept of team results. A sheet of squared paper, pinned up in a prominent position, will have a "thermometer" drawn upon it for each team, and it will be the privilege of the child with the best effort to add the team aggregate to the record. The pupils will watch the "mercury" with interest, and rivalry will be keen. A special concession should be given to the winning team.

This group system, without further development, sometimes bears rather heavily on the duller pupils. Recriminations are made over deficiencies by children in the same group, and the team-spirit is lost. It was to prevent just such an eventuality that chums were placed together; and you now add the further safe-guard of "adoption."

Within each team allow bright and dull pupils to assume foster-relationships. While individual work, apart from tests, is proceeding, the more intellectual child, or foster-parent, on finishing his own task and revising it, has as his first duty to see that all is well with his protégé. The latter, in his turn, is at liberty when in difficulties to go at once to his "parent" for aid.

This interchange means that the dull pupil does not have to wait until the teacher is free to come to him; it means, too, that the "parent" is making his own knowledge more secure by teaching; and the gratifying improvement in the standard of work is of less importance than the continued training in mutual aid and social responsibility.

"Does not cheating occur under this system?" you

ask. Of course it does. Initially, unless very far-seeing, the "parent" merely tells, and the foster-child accepts. When, however, a test is returned, both are disappointed with the latter's marks. The teacher tactfully explains the reason. When help is again given, the "parent" tries to show "how" and "why." Cheating is cured.

Rural schools are peculiarly adapted for this adoptive plan. A teacher with four classes in one room, for example, had one at the blackboard, the others working in their seats, when a little fellow arose, crossed the room quietly and talked in an undertone with a much bigger boy. Both left the room, to return a few minutes later. The teacher paid no heed, but later on he enquired: "What was it this time?" The older boy replied: "He wanted to know how to join a branch to the trunk and I took him out to look at it."

These schemes¹ will help the children and will take you closer to them, if your leadership is sound; yet, schemes alone will not do. Each child must be studied well. His work will tell you much, his play more, but not until you understand his home environment will you have the surest lines of approach to his individuality.

Correction of Misbehaviour

Paradoxically, as it may seem, the occurrence of misconduct offers a direct opportunity of helping the individual. It is as important to know how you are to act in face of disobedience as it is to know how to prepare and to teach a lesson, and in considering particular instances it is equally essential to remember

¹ The literature of the subject is extensive, but see particularly *Individual Methods in the Primary School*, by C. M. Fleming (Harrap); *Adjusting the School to the Child*, by C. Washburne (World Book Coy.); *Some Primary School Methods*, by L. G. Slocum (The Macmillan Co.).

that no two children are alike, that animal spirits are not in themselves a crime, and that the "worst" children may have been misbehaving just because you have failed to see the good in them. Punishment, therefore, should be a last resort. And, as the spirit of co-operation wins its way under your comprehending guidance, it should steadily decrease in its frequency. The teacher who is continually punishing is unfit to take charge of children.

Three main types of difficulty are likely to occur.

Deliberate disobedience is a direct challenge to the teacher and must be dealt with as such. Most cases can be solved by his own common sense, but it is well to remember that cases of unusual difficulty demand consultation with the head-teacher. Even the beginner, however, will have to assume the responsibility of deciding when, and for whom, extreme measures are necessary, and he ought, therefore, to have a perfectly clear understanding of all that is involved.

Corporal punishment is looked upon askance in many quarters to-day. In the old days it was abused, and abused badly, but there can be no doubt that certain natures appear to be incapable of giving respect until they have been made to feel the physical effects of running contrary to orders "with intent"—and they are often, in the ultimate sense, our best children. What of the child's point of view? Children prefer a firm and just teacher. They expect to have to obey, and they have but little use for anyone who does not see that they do.

Be fair, young teacher, to our spirited children.

The underhand bully who incites others to mischief whilst presenting an apparently innocent front to the storm is a more difficult problem and will require special thought—and action—on the part of the young teacher.

The third occasion is the need of a corrective for thoughtlessness or for careless work. You must, as always, examine all the circumstances, and only when the fault is clearly deliberate will punishment ensue. Yet slovenly habits cannot be left unchecked. Punishment exercises are undoubtedly called for in such cases, but selection must be made with skill. The mere transcription of a number of "lines" is worse than useless. It is a fruitful source of friction between pupil and teacher, and may undo much of the good already done. Let the extra tasks be on some subject which will help the delinquent, and unwilling acquiescence in your command may turn to interest in a subject which, previously, had no attraction. Then will these tasks fulfil their purpose, for the supreme aim of all school punishment is not to inflict pain but to strengthen and correct.

Widening Horizons

Children, like young trees, must not only be well-rooted and fed, and held straight in their tender years to enable them to grow in strength toward the skies ; they must have room to spread their branches. Meantime, while you go on studying how best to encourage each of your pupils to expand in his or her natural direction, you can open up avenues which will be of advantage to all.

Self-reliance grows with responsibility. It is a sound rule of life never to do anything for a child which he can reasonably be expected to do for himself. Therefore, let the pupils take turns at preparing the room for you, seeing that chalk and a duster are available, preparing other apparatus for you when possible, and the like. They will feel that the room really belongs to you all, and both they and you will reap the benefit.

In this delegation of authority, however, you must not lose your own. The same watchful care must be bestowed upon these activities as upon lessons. See that each does his best. Careless oversight on your part here would give opportunity for the beginning of "dry-rot."

Open up the world for your children. Form a class library. Even very young school-children are able to look at pictures and soon learn to read simple sentences. With a central library in the school possibilities will be widened, but a collection of books in your own room enables you to have full freedom in directing the energies of your young enthusiasts. In a matter of this kind, of course, natural courtesy will cause you to lay the matter in the first instance before the headmaster. He may not be able to give you at the moment any grant from school funds, but he will very likely be in full agreement with your ideas.

Money need not be a difficulty. As it is easier to beg for others than for oneself, ask your friends for any suitable books they no longer require. If you fail to obtain sufficient in that way, suggest to the children that, if each brings one book no longer needed at home, a real library of their own can be started. Some will even bring two or three. Be careful to ask for the books as gifts, for by the end of the session they may be too much the worse for wear to return.

Some parents, you will find, have extraordinary ideas of what is suitable reading material for immature minds. You must safeguard your children. Tell them tactfully but frankly that you are to be the judge of whether a book is suitable or not. By this time, having faith in your judgment, they will accept this dictum as the natural ruling.

Collect too, and keep at hand, things which may be useful in any way. Not all children are literary. A boy may find his bent through handling materials, and the doorway of your spare cupboard may become for him the threshold of a new and enthralling expansion.

Initiative and moral strength cannot be produced by preaching at the children ; nor are these qualities induced with ease. Question and answer, however, give you an opening. We have seen already that many children know the correct answer but hesitate shyly. Encourage these diffident people. Commend them briefly but heartily, and give them opportunities to stand to their opinions. Show, likewise, that change of view, when additional insight has been obtained, is a sign, not of weakness, but of strength ; and when you have also added steady practice in responsibility, those shrinking natures will be facing life with growing confidence in themselves.

There will probably always be hewers of wood and drawers of water, and our duty clearly is to help them all we can to be capable and trustworthy workers and thoughtful and earnest citizens. In the early stages of life, however, with which we are now dealing, prophecy may be in many cases mere conjecture. That "dull" boy at the end of the front bench may yet rule you and me or produce the most beneficial invention of the century. The teacher works in faith. He strives to encourage to steady endeavour, not some, but each, of his pupils. Perhaps that very boy is the one to be reached by your next effort.

Your previous activities show that you have permanently rid yourself of thinking only in terms of school subjects. Now take a step into the world in which the children live outside.

The organised school games in the playgrounds and playing-fields are not included in this step. Since you became a member of the school staff, you have taken your full share of these activities with enthusiasm ; and you have found that the success of your work in school has been greatly increased by your co-operation at play.

Many children, even though ranking high in school, frequently have ill-conceived and chaotic ideas about things in the world at large. Not a few grow to "maturity" retaining ideas that are unsound and contradictory, because they have lacked a guide. Begin to help your pupils to see life more clearly by a simple first step.

Let them tell you things. You will become intensely interested, for you will now see many of your young people from angles hitherto inaccessible. Some of the "facts" you will hear will surprise you, for you will discover that boys and girls often base their opinions on insufficient data. For example, a boy of 7, on his first visit to the country, was given a duck's egg as a special treat at breakfast. He refused it, saying, "I don't want it. There'll be worms in it." Again, language will puzzle a child, and queer ideas will result. It was a boy of 12 who insisted, in the face of opposition, that St Paul really was a sailor, "because I read in the Bible that 'he plied his craft daily.'"

A certain amount of difficulty will have to be faced in listening to and in handling the information you receive. It must not be given during any lesson unless you so indicate ; otherwise you will be completely snowed under. What you are told will be at intervals and at odd moments and will present no more difficult than is involved in the utilisation of answers.

The next step will probably be taken for you by the children themselves, for the urge-to-know is perhaps childhood's strongest characteristic. The pupils will

ask questions. You will want to answer these queries regarding their outside life, yet you will be utterly overwhelmed unless you work to a plan, with rigid rules. With a class aged 9 or upwards, the following scheme may suit you ; it has already proved its value both in the elementary and in the secondary school.

Introduce a "Want-to-know"-box.¹ Let it stand during the day on your table or desk, and permit the children to put in their slips of paper at any break between periods but not during any lesson. Welcome questions about their lessons or about their outside interests. All interrogations, however, should be written in sentences, and each must be signed by the enquirer. The signature is necessary at all times if the questions are to serve the double purpose of helping the individual and of enabling you to understand your pupils.

Each afternoon, when the children are gone, examine and replace the slips. Daily you will understand your pupils better, and sometimes their requests for revision of a lesson which you had thought was driven well and truly home will clear your own mind of delusions about your teaching.

Once a week open the box in the presence of the children and deal at least with some of the questions. The last period of Friday afternoon is suitable. The change from regular lessons can be given as a reward for steady endeavour during the week.

On Thursday afternoon you will have taken home the slips, in order not to be caught quite unprepared. Four types of questions will be before you :—

- (1) Frivolous.
- (2) Showing off, or to test the teacher.
- (3) Due to laziness to try himself.
- (4) Genuine enquiries, wondrously varied.

¹ An empty chalk-box with a slit cut in the lid serves admirably.

Ignore (1) and (2) : neglect soon causes them to cease. Across (3) write "Search" and return them to their owners. Explain (4) to the children and enlist the aid of other teachers where your own knowledge is deficient.

In any week in which you cannot thus use the Friday period, you can set out on a sheet of foolscap the genuine questions and your answers. Pinned upon the wall and left for a week it will be examined with close interest.

The benefits of the scheme are obvious. The extra trouble involved is more than repaid by the results. Misconceptions are corrected, initiative is encouraged, and widening horizons invite the young people to make explorations for themselves.

You should retain these question slips week by week. Some day they may prove of supreme value when you have occasion to deal with the problems of class and school libraries and of equipment, or when you desire to write a book giving others the benefit of your own research.

CONCLUSION

This book began with your personal needs ; it closes with your subjective dangers.

A great mistake is made by the young enthusiast when, forgetting that character-training is a silent process, he continually preaches to, and sometimes at, his pupils. He drives his finest pupils into their shells.

A cure for what is often an unconsciously acquired habit may be found in resolution to abstain, and by remembering that scolding and exhortation must obey the rules of sound description. The voice must be conserved. Explanation must show a wise selection even in moments of crisis and temptation.

The second pitfall is to imagine that every attractive new theory is applicable to school children at all times and in all places. The seasoned, progressive teacher examines each innovation against his wide background of experience and selects only what can stand the test. The young teacher will find his safeguard in delay. A session's weathering in the blistering winds of experience will serve to remove his temptation to judge by surface glitter, and will help him to know if the new theory will stand the test of time.

The third danger seldom shows its symptoms till it is too late. Youth pities age—at twenty-one, is not even thirty a world away?—and speaks of “old fogies in a rut.” So did we all, and the years have rolled on; so will it be with you. “Rutification” is no sudden mishap. It is the outcome of a long-unnoticed, unceasing process which has its beginning in youth—unless you are on your guard.

Pay heed to the fleeting doubt that sometimes follows upon even a reasoned decision: it is the warning of the subconscious mind that all the factors have not been fully considered. You profess to pity those whose minds are already in a rut; but you yourself may be rushing so much and thinking so carelessly that you are in danger of becoming self-centred and of losing your own breadth of view.

Be ready, too, to recognise the unbidden thoughts that flash unannounced into the realm of the conscious: they are our rare moments of inspiration which, seized, will abundantly serve us; escaping once, may never return. The subconscious stores and arranges our thoughts and, in its own time, selects and transmits the solutions to our problems. But unless we support it by the constant observation of our problems from angles other than those merely of our own desires, the subconscious response will be so conditioned by those

desires that our moments of inspiration, when they come, will take us not out of, but along, an ever-deepening rut.

Selfishness is the world's curse, ignorance man's deadliest foe, and rutification one of their offspring. May you keep an open mind. We deal with the little citizens, we deal with tiny details day after day, but the effect of our work is almost bigger than we can grasp, for we are building, little by little, the world of the years to be.

THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY

THE young teacher who wishes to be fully equipped for his work not infrequently asks for guidance in regard to the books he should read. The following list of books is not intended to be exhaustive or exclusive, but is offered as a minimum of books of a reasonable price that will stimulate the young teacher and help him both to teach and to handle his pupils.

A. *Educational Psychology*

- The Children We Teach.* Susan Isaacs.
University of London Press.
The New Examiner. P. B. Ballard. 2nd edition.
University of London Press.
Everyday Problems of the Everyday Child. D. A. Thom.
Appleton.
A Handbook of Tests. C. Burt. P. S. King & Son.


B. *General Education*

- The Modern Education of Young Children.* Editor, N. Catty.
Methuen.
The Education of Backward Children. Evan Bros.
Some Primary Methods. L. G. Sloman. Macmillan Co.
Adjusting the School to the Child. C. Washburne.
World Book Co.
Backwardness in the Basic Subjects. F. J. Schonell.
Oliver and Boyd Ltd.

C. *Subjects*

- Diagnosis of Individual Difficulties in Arithmetic.* F. J. Schonell.
Oliver and Boyd Ltd.
The Psychology and Teaching of Reading. F. J. Schonell.
Oliver and Boyd Ltd.
The Essential Spelling List for Seniors. Schonell and Brown.
Oliver and Boyd Ltd.
The Teaching of Arithmetic. F. F. Potter. Pitman.
Essentials in Teaching and Testing Spelling. F. J. Schonell.
Macmillan & Co.
A Handbook for Geography Teachers. D. M. Forsaith. Methuen.
A Handbook for History Teachers. H. Dymond. Methuen.

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